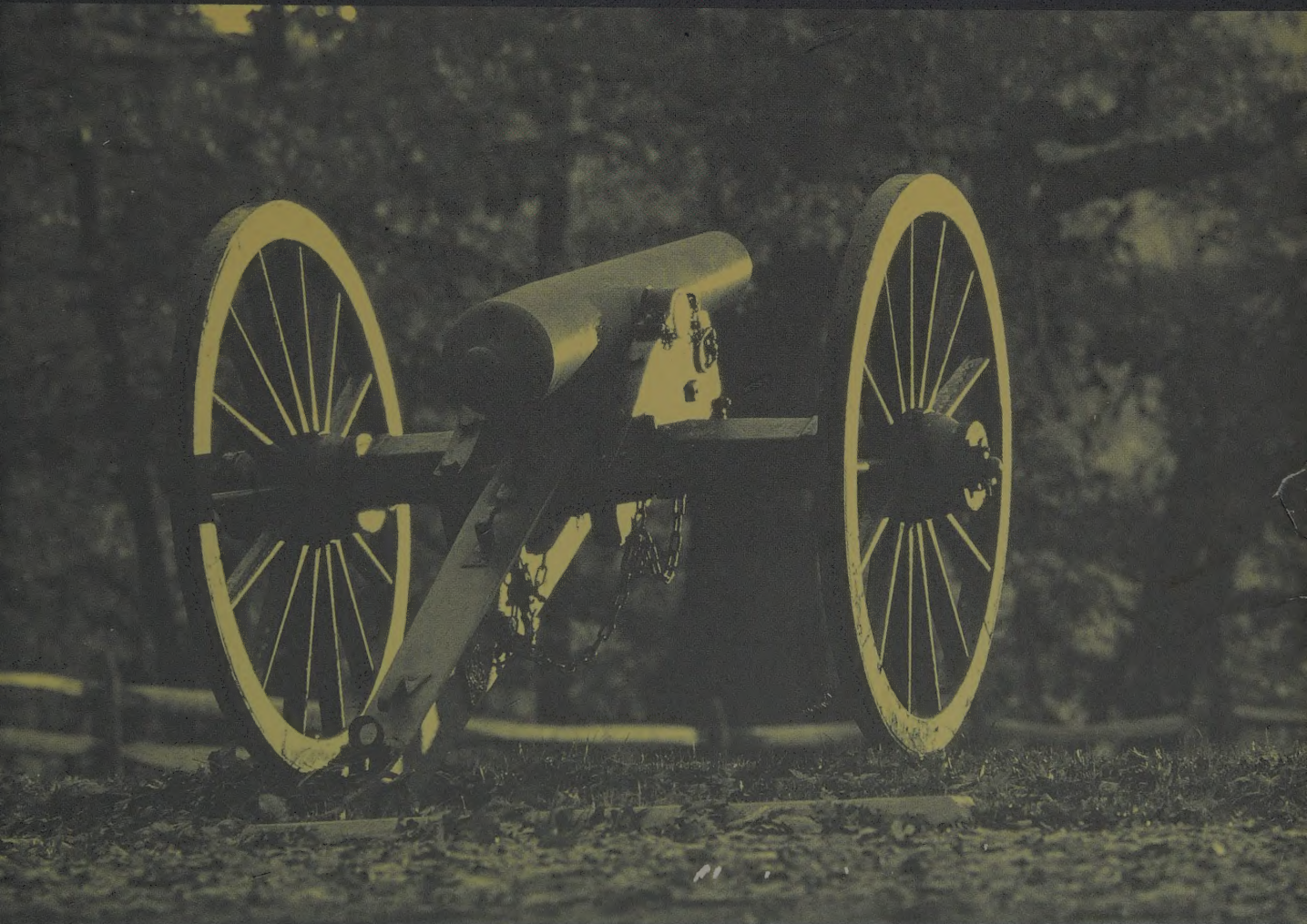


# THE ENDURING VISION

A HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE / VOL. 1

FOURTH EDITION



BOYER CLARK KETT SALISBURY SITKOFF WOLOCH

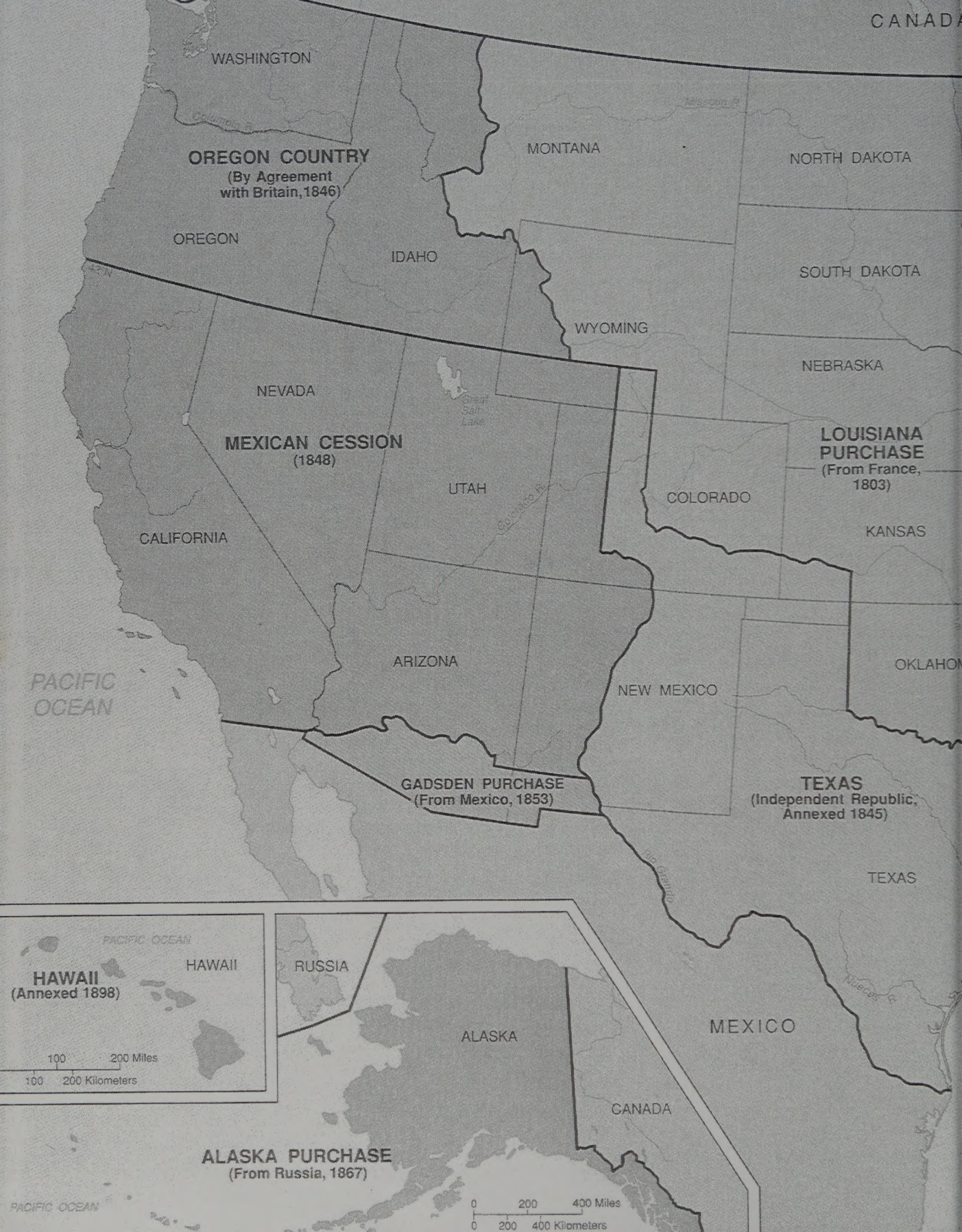
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**OREGON COUNTRY**  
(By Agreement with Britain, 1846)

**MEXICAN CESSION**  
(1848)

**LOUISIANA PURCHASE**  
(From France, 1803)

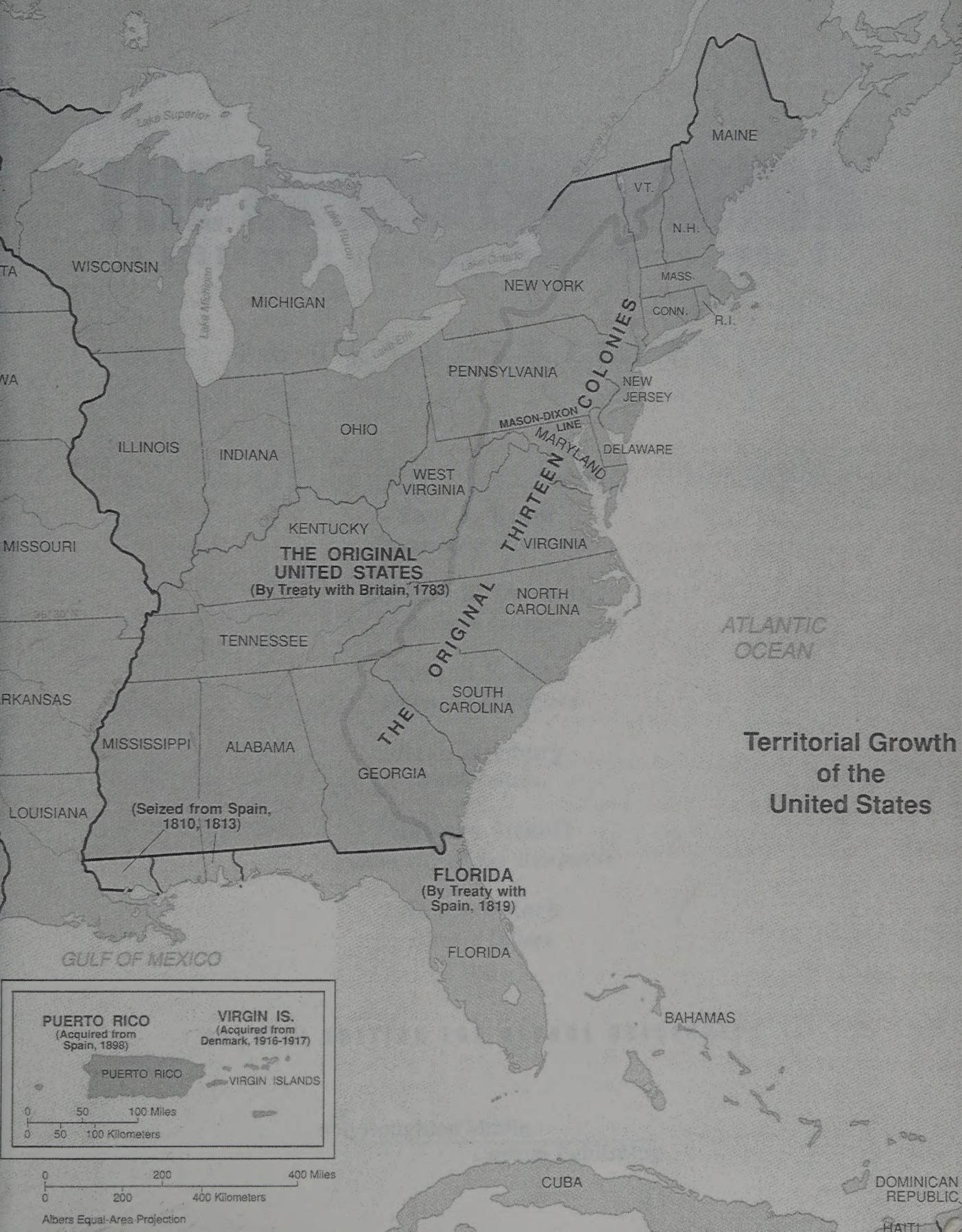
**GADSDEN PURCHASE**  
(From Mexico, 1853)

**TEXAS**  
(Independent Republic, Annexed 1845)

**ALASKA PURCHASE**  
(From Russia, 1867)

**HAWAII**  
(Annexed 1898)





## Territorial Growth of the United States

**PUERTO RICO**  
(Acquired from Spain, 1898)

**VIRGIN IS.**  
(Acquired from Denmark, 1916-1917)

PUERTO RICO

VIRGIN ISLANDS

0 50 100 Miles

0 50 100 Kilometers

0 200 400 Miles

0 200 400 Kilometers

Albers Equal-Area Projection







# THE ENDURING VISION

A HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE / VOL. I

F O U R T H   E D I T I O N

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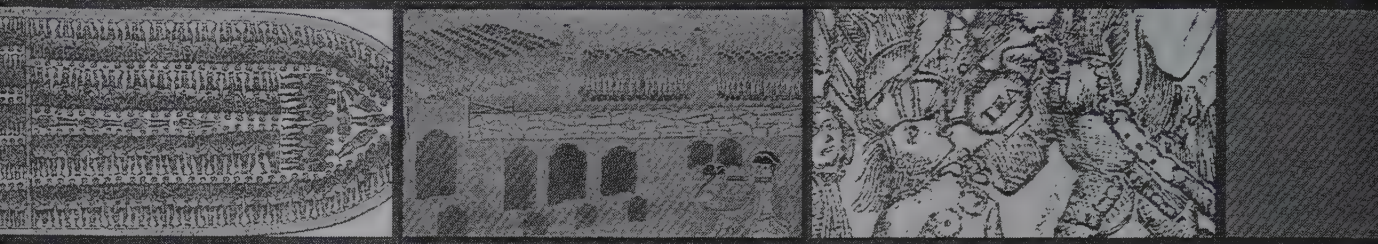
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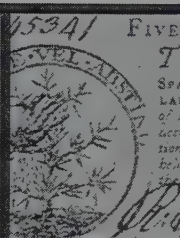
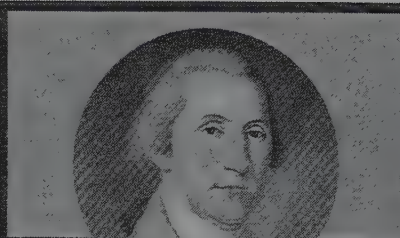
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# Preface

Each new edition of a textbook presents a different challenge. While the first edition is the most exciting—because of the chance to see our vision in print and the years of hard work it takes to write—subsequent editions assume their own identity as well. The second edition affords an opportunity to attend to those details that schedule or other circumstances made difficult to get just right in the first edition. However, the gratification of being successful enough to warrant a second edition is soon superseded by the unexpected amount of work a revision requires. But all that work to get everything just right meant in the third edition we could reexamine decisions we made in the first edition regarding issues of organization and content. So the major thrust of the third edition was to provide more attention to the borderland communities in the South and West and to continue weaving in the story of Americans' encounters with the natural environment.

In making these decisions about what to change and what new areas to emphasize, we, of course, rely on the criticism and suggestions we get from those who have used our book as well as from colleagues and on our own teaching experience and scholarly pursuits. The success of *The Enduring Vision* is a wonderful confirmation of our original ideas for what a textbook for the U.S. history survey should be. And while we continue to make substantive changes in each new edition, these changes all conform to the framework we established in the first edition. In that first edition, our desire was to write a book that established a sturdy political and chronological framework into which we could integrate the best scholarship in social, cultural, and environmental history. *The Enduring Vision* was to be a book that synthesized much of the best scholarship in these areas and presented it to students in an engaging and challenging narrative. To that end, we labored long and hard to get the writing just right, to communicate to students through vigorous prose that American history is a dynamic story of many parts. Names, dates, and places are important but only as they help inform the nature of the actions and decisions that shaped our history.

## *New to This Edition*

In its three editions, *The Enduring Vision* has established the identity we desired. In the fourth edition, the challenge was how to build on that solid foundation and make improvements. In considering this challenge, we decided to look again at the writing style as well as the usual issues raised by new scholarship and the comments of our users. We cover a lot of ground in *The Enduring Vision* and this attempt to be as comprehensive as possible means there is a lot for students to absorb. And in their efforts to absorb all this material, they also have to be able to discern what is most important in each chapter and be able to recognize the themes we are emphasizing and the arguments we are making. This can be challenging for even the best students. So in this edition we decided to offer some help. We've gone through each chapter thoroughly to ensure that the level of detail of the writing provides just the right amount of information and emphasis to the reader. Where we found that the amount of information threatened to overwhelm the student, we either eliminated some of it or rewrote passages to make them more clear. Essentially, we wanted to make the same points, while in some cases actually saying less. The result is a shorter book that should be more accessible to students.

In addition to tightening the prose, we have added a new feature to each chapter—focus questions. These questions follow the chapter-opening vignettes and serve to introduce students to the main points that will be discussed in the chapter. They will help provide a framework into which students can fit what follows. The conclusions have also been reconceived to revisit the issues raised in the focus questions and to wrap up the chapter.

Of course a key aspect of the revision process is to examine each chapter to see where new scholarship might fit and to respond to the concerns of our users. Adding our own judgment to this process, we have made the following substantive changes in the fourth edition as well as many more minor changes to each chapter.



In Chapter 2, new material has been added on the history of Africa and Europe that illustrates that they had some shared history prior to and aside from the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Chapter 3 incorporates new scholarship on the household economy and gender in New England. With an additional discussion comparing the Spanish and French colonies with the English, there are now allusions to the colonial histories of many more states than the original thirteen in Chapter 4. Some sections of Chapters 5 to 7 have been reorganized and rewritten, and those chapters provide more attention to women, African Americans, native Americans, frontier conflicts, and the economy.

In Chapter 9, there is increased emphasis on the role of industrial outwork, and especially on the role of women in this type of manufacturing. New scholarship in Chapter 10 focuses on the election of 1836 and a new explanation of Jackson's early popularity as an outgrowth of popular ire against corruption. Chapter 12 features a revised discussion of proslavery arguments and of slave rebellions, as well as new material on southern evangelicals and white values. There is a new discussion in Chapter 13 on the non-inevitability of the Monroe Doctrine and more attention to the opinions of Mexicans regarding the Mexican War.

Chapter 15, on the Civil War, includes an expanded discussion of the Thirteenth Amendment and of self-emancipation during the war. There is greater attention to the Chinese in the West and the connection between the Homestead Act and the political ideology of the Republican Party in Chapter 17. In Chapter 18 new material has been added on the character of industrial change, including the ambiguous impact of industrialization on the independence of single women. The notion of regional centers has been expanded to include Chicago and San Francisco, as have the industrialization of the West and the impact of standardization on everyday life. There is new emphasis on the impact of immigrant life on nineteenth-century cities by the rich mix of ethnic groups that created a diverse, competitive civic culture in Chapter 19. Chapter 20 continues the emphasis on immigration and class by demonstrating how racial discrimination reinforced class distinctions and served as a barrier to advancement for African Americans, Italians, Chinese, and others.

Discussion of the Grange movement has been moved into Chapter 21 for better chronological coherence. Additional material has been added on the impact of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, why Cleveland beat Harrison in 1892, the role of African Americans in the Spanish

American War, and the economic sources of expansionism. In Chapter 22, new material has been added on the antiprostitution crusade, immigration procedures, and water resources in the West. There is expanded treatment of the Wilson administration's response to the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia in Chapter 23 and more material has been added on the Mellon tax cuts, farmers' defection from the GOP in the 1928 election, falling immigration in the 1920s, anti-Japanese laws in California, and the spread of the KKK in the Northeast in Chapter 24.

In Chapter 25, discussion of the Supreme Court's turnaround in 1937 has been broadened, new material on unions has been added, and the discussion of the New Deal's impact on the evolution of the American state has been expanded. In addition, there is new material on FDR's use of wartime imagery in his efforts to build a spirit of national unity, the New Deal arts program, and the New Deal and the West. In Chapter 26, coverage of Japanese and Filipino agricultural workers has been added as well as further discussion of the later importance of the Munich analogy, more on Walter Reuther and the tensions between radicals and moderates in the 1930s labor movement, the New Deal policy toward Indians, and the strategic calculations underlying FDR's Good Neighbor Policy.

The discussion of the war economy in the West and the Sunbelt has been expanded as well as coverage of women in the military and the homefront, and of gays and Hispanics in Chapter 27. In Chapter 28, the beginnings of the modern conservative movement in American politics are introduced and new scholarship on Alger Hiss, the Rosenbergs, and Senate action against gays has been added. In Chapter 29, the effects of defense and government spending on the economic development of the West receives more attention and a new discussion of the beginnings of Silicon Valley has been added. The discussion of the development of modern conservatism continues in Chapter 30, and a new discussion of Indian agency has been introduced.

In Chapter 31, there is a new treatment of the New Left and youth culture, and continued development of the rise of conservatism. Chapter 32 features more on *Roe v. Wade*, the relationship of the ERA defeat to the antifeminist backlash, affirmative action, President Reagan's effect on the federal judiciary, and campus protests of the Gulf War. And finally, Chapter 33 has been updated through the Senate trial of President Clinton and material has been added on the federal tobacco bill, campaign-finance reform, the Lewinsky scandal,

## About the Authors

**Paul S. Boyer**, Merle Curti Professor of History at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, earned his Ph.D. from Harvard University. An editor of *Notable American Women, 1607–1950* (1971), he also coauthored *Salem Possessed: The Social Origins of Witchcraft* (1974), for which, with Stephen Nissenbaum, he received the John H. Dunning Prize of the American Historical Association. His other published works include *Urban Masses and Moral Order in America, 1820–1920* (1978), *By the Bomb's Early Light: American Thought and Culture at the Dawn of the Atomic Age* (1985), *When Time Shall Be No More: Prophecy Belief in Modern American Culture* (1992), and *Promises to Keep: The United States Since World War II*, 2nd ed. (1999). He is also editor-in-chief of the *Oxford Companion to United States History* (forthcoming). His articles and essays have appeared in the *American Quarterly*, *New Republic*, and other journals. He is an elected member of the American Antiquarian Society, the Society of American Historians, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

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# *The Enduring Vision*

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*Prologue*

Enduring Vision,  

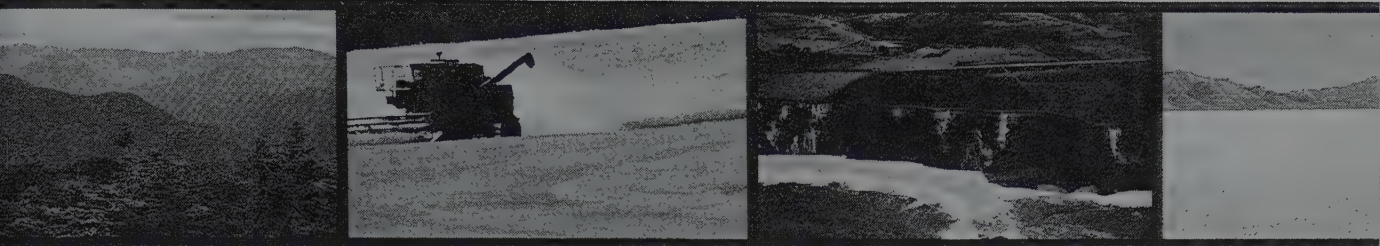
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Enduring Land



**Eroded Lava Badlands**, by Alexandre Hogue, 1982





This is the story of America and of the visions that Americans have shared. The first vision was of the land itself. For the Native Americans who spread over the land thousands of years ago, for the Europeans who began to arrive in the sixteenth century, and for the later immigrants who poured in by the tens of millions from all parts of the world, North America offered a haven for new beginnings. If life was hard elsewhere, it would be better here. And once here, the lure of the land continued. If times were tough in the East, they would be better in the West. New Englanders migrated to Ohio; Ohioans migrated to Kansas; Kansans migrated to California. For Africans the migration to America was forced and brutal. But after the Civil War, newly freed southern blacks embraced the vision and dreamed of new opportunities elsewhere:

I got my ticket,  
Leaving the thicket,  
And I'm a-heading for the Golden Shore!

For most of American history, the vision of the land celebrated its beauty, its diversity, and its ability to provide sustenance and even wealth to those who exploited its fertility and its resources. But within this shared vision were deep-seated tensions. Whereas Native Americans regarded the land and other natural phenomena as spiritual forces to be feared and respected, many Europeans and their descendants considered nature a force to be conquered. The very abundance of America's natural resources led them to think of these resources as infinitely available and exploitable. In moving from one locale to another, some sought only to escape starvation or oppression, while others pursued wealth and power despite the environmental consequences. Regardless of their motives

and conditions, migrants often left behind a land bereft of wild animals, its fertility depleted by intensive farming, its waters dammed and polluted or dried up altogether. If the land today remains part of the vision, it is only because we realize its vulnerability, rather than its immunity, to pollution and exploitation.

But the vision involves more than simply a love of the land. It also entails a commitment to an ongoing process: the process of creating a just social order. In pursuing this goal, Americans have sought to blend the best from their intellectual and cultural traditions with new, experimental social forms, a pattern often leading to bitter debates. Over thousands of years, Native Americans worked in this way to construct ideal social orders as they refined their relationships with one another and with the land around them. For the past five hundred years, immigrants from all over the world have pursued comparable ideals, both within their communities and in the nation at large.

Central to the American vision of the good society is the notion of individual freedom. To be sure, our commitment to freedom has frequently faltered in practice. The Puritans who sought freedom of worship for themselves denied it to others. Southern whites who cheered the Declaration of Independence lived by the labor of black slaves. Many a wealthy employer conveniently forgot that economic exploitation can extinguish freedom as effectively as political tyranny or military force. And through much of our history, women—half the population—were relegated to second-class status. Yet the battered vision endured, prodding a sometimes reluctant nation to confront and explore its full meaning.

But freedom can be an empty and cheerless thing unless one is also part of a social group. The novelist

O. E. Rølvaag, describing the emotions of a nineteenth-century Norwegian immigrant farm woman on the Great Plains, captured this feeling of social isolation:

A sense of desolation so profound settled upon her that she seemed unable to think at all. . . . She threw herself back in the grass and looked up into the heavens. But darkness and infinitude lay there, also—the sense of utter desolation still remained. . . . Suddenly, for the first time, she realized the full extent of her loneliness. . . .

Thus the vision must also be one of community. Puritan leader John Winthrop, addressing a group of fellow immigrants aboard the *Arbella* on their way to America in 1630, eloquently summed up this dimension of the vision: “We must delight in each other, make others’ conditions our own, rejoice together, mourn together, labor and suffer together: always having before our eyes our commission and community . . . as members of the same body.”

The family, the town, the neighborhood, the church, the ethnic group, and the nation itself have been ways by which Americans have woven into their lives a web of social meaning. And *community* is not just a high-sounding abstraction; it has political implications. If we are not just a fragmented collection of self-absorbed individuals but also a *people*, what obligations do we owe one another? What limitations on our freedom are we willing to accept in order to be part of a social group? In struggling with tough questions like these, we have further defined our vision of America.

Finally, this vision is one of renewal and new beginnings. The story of America is part of the human story, and thus it has its dark and shameful passages as well as its bright moments of achievement. Arrogance, injustice, callous blindness to suffering, and national self-delusion have all figured in our history. But balancing the times when we lost our way are the moments when we found our bearings and returned to the hard task of defining what America at its best might truly be.

This, then, is the essence of the vision: a vision not of a foreordained national destiny unfolding effortlessly but of a laborious, often frustrating struggle to define what our common life as a people shall be. For all the failures and the wrong turns, it remains a vision rooted in hope, not despair. In 1980 Jesse de la Cruz, a Mexican-American woman who had fought for years to improve conditions for California’s migrant workers,

summed up the philosophy that kept her going: “Is America progressing toward the better? . . . We’re the ones that are gonna do it. We have to keep on struggling. . . . With us, there’s a saying: *La esperanza muere al último*. Hope dies last. You can’t lose hope. If you lose hope, that’s losing everything.”

No sentiment could better sum up the enduring vision of American history.

## An Ancient Heritage

“The land was ours before we were the land’s.” So begins “The Gift Outright,” which poet Robert Frost read at President John F. Kennedy’s inauguration in 1961. Frost’s poem meditates on the interrelatedness of history, geography, and human consciousness. At first, wrote Frost, North American settlers merely possessed the land; but then, in a subtle spiritual process, they became possessed by it. Only by entering into this deep relationship with the land itself—“such as she was, such as she would become”—did their identity as a people fully take shape.

Frost’s poem speaks of the encounter of English colonists with a strange new continent of mystery and promise; but of course, what the Europeans called the “New World” was in fact the homeland of Native American peoples whose ancestors had been “possessed by” the land for at least fifteen thousand years. Native Americans had undergone an immensely long process of settling the continent, developing divergent cultures, discovering agriculture, and creating a rich spiritual life tightly interwoven with the physical environment that sustained them. We cannot fully comprehend the past five hundred years of American history without first understanding how, for thousands of years before then, Indians created the human habitats that non-Indians and their descendants would occupy and transform.

To comprehend the American past, we first must know the American land itself. The patterns of weather; the undulations of valley, plain, and mountain; the shifting mosaic of sand, soil, and rock; the intricate network of rivers, streams, and lakes—these have profoundly influenced U.S. history. North America’s fundamental physical characteristics have shaped human events from the earliest migrations from Asia to the later cycles of agricultural and industrial development, the rise of cities, the course of politics, and even the basic themes of American literature, art, and music. Geology, geogra-



## CHRONOLOGY

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|---|--|---|
| <p><b>c. 3,000,000,000 B.C.</b> Formation of oldest known rocks in present-day North America.</p> <p><b>c. 500,000,000 B.C.</b> Precambrian era ends; Paleozoic era begins. Earliest forms of animal life appear.</p> <p><b>c. 250,000,000 B.C.</b> Supercontinent of Pangaea forms.</p> <p><b>c. 225,000,000 B.C.</b> Paleozoic era ends; Mesozoic era begins. First dinosaurs appear.</p> <p><b>c. 210,000,000 B.C.</b> Appalachian Mountains emerge.</p> <p><b>c. 180,000,000 B.C.</b> Pangaea begins to break up.</p> | <p><b>c. 65,000,000 B.C.</b> Mesozoic era ends; Cenozoic era begins. Dinosaurs become extinct. Rocky Mountains form.</p> <p><b>c. 50,000,000 B.C.</b> Hawaiian Islands emerge.</p> <p><b>c. 20,000,000 B.C.</b> Grand Canyon begins to form.</p> <p><b>c. 5,000,000 B.C.</b> Earliest human ancestors appear in Africa.</p> <p><b>c. 2,000,000 B.C.</b> Ice Age begins.</p> <p><b>c. 300,000–100,000 B.C.</b> Humans spread throughout Eastern Hemisphere.</p> | <p><b>c. 120,000 B.C.</b> Wisconsin glaciation begins.</p> <p><b>c. 40,000–15,000 B.C.</b> Ancestors of Native Americans cross Alaska-Siberian land bridge.</p> <p><b>c. 10,000 B.C.</b> Ice Age ends. Wisconsin glaciation retreats from North America. Native Americans begin to spread throughout Western Hemisphere.</p> <p><b>A.D. 1492</b> Christopher Columbus makes his first voyage to Western Hemisphere.</p> |
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phy, and environment are among the fundamental building blocks of human history.

This prologue tells the story of the land itself: its geological origins; its reshaping by eons of lifting, sinking, erosion, and glaciation; the opportunities and limitations that it presents to human endeavor. It reminds us of the ultimate dependence of human beings on their environment.

It is sobering to begin the study of American history by contrasting the recent rise of a rich, complex human society on this continent with the awesomely slow pace by which the North American environment took form. Geologists trace the oldest known rocks on the continent back some 3 billion years when a single land-mass, which they call Pangaea, encompassed all the earth's dry surfaces. The rocky "floor" known as the Canadian Shield first became visible on the surface of what is now Canada during the earliest geologic era, the Precambrian, which ended 500 million years ago. Halfway between that remote age and the present, during the Paleozoic ("ancient life") era, forests covered much of what would eventually be the United States. From this organic matter, America's enormous coal reserves would be created, the largest yet discovered in the entire world. About 180 million years ago, during the Mesozoic ("middle life") era—the age of the dinosaurs—Pangaea began to break apart. By a process

known as continental drift—which continues today at the rate of a few centimeters a year—today's continents were eventually formed. As a result, most plant and animal life in each of the earth's major landmasses—the Americas, Eurasia-Africa, Australia, and Antarctica—evolved thereafter in isolation from life in the others. As environmental historian Alfred W. Crosby puts it, "The ancestors of American buffalos, Eurasian cattle, and Australian kangaroos shambled and hopped down diverging paths of evolution." The overseas expansion of Europeans in the past five centuries has brought an abrupt end to that isolation, with some far-reaching consequences in North America that are noted in the chapters that follow.

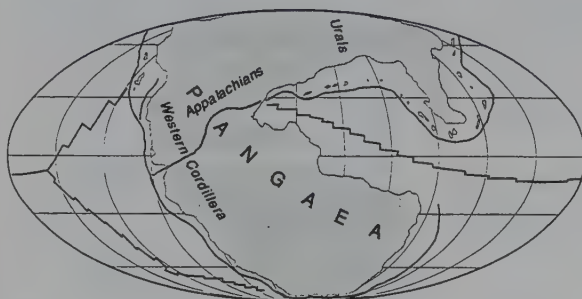
So enormous a gulf of time separates the origins of North America from the beginning of its human history that, if those 180 million years were compressed into the space of a single twenty-four-hour day, everything that has happened since the Indians' ancestors arrived would flash by in the last half-second before midnight, and America's history since Columbus would occupy about five-thousandths of a second. In considering the sweep of geologic time, one inevitably wonders how ephemeral human history itself may yet prove to be.

Many millions of years after North America's initial separation, violent movements of the earth's crust thrust up the Pacific Coastal, Sierra Nevada, and Cas-

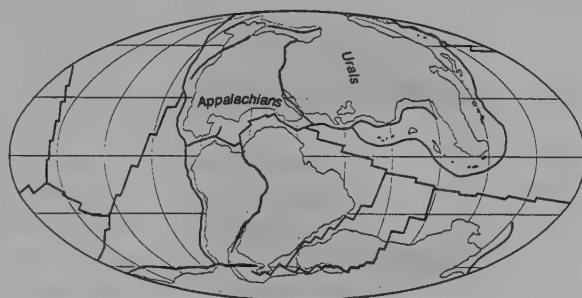
## Formation of the Continents

*After the breakup of the supercontinent of Pangaea, drifting landmasses gradually formed today's continents.*

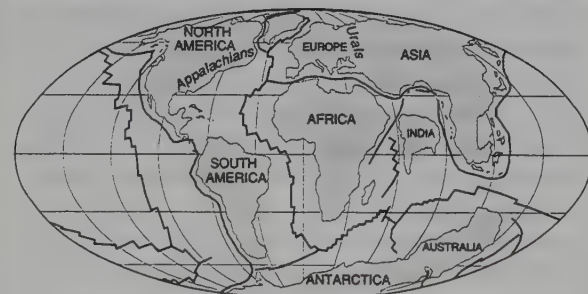
**180 million years ago**



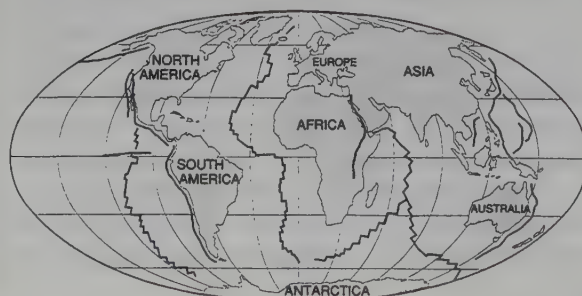
**125 million years ago**



**55 million years ago**



**Today**



cade ranges on the continent's western edge. As the dinosaurs were dying out, toward the end of the Mesozoic some 65–70 million years ago, the vast, shallow sea that washed over much of west-central North America disappeared, having been replaced by the Rocky Mountains. By then, the decay and fossilization of plant and animal life were creating North America's once great petroleum deposits, which until a generation ago seemed almost limitless. Within the last 50 million years, volcanic eruptions raised the cones that now form the Hawaiian Islands, twenty-five hundred miles southwest of California. Active Pacific-rim volcanoes and powerful earthquakes all over the continent dramatically demonstrate that the molding of the American landscape still continues.

Between 2 million and ten thousand years ago, four great glaciations left a tremendous imprint on the land. The Ice Age staggers the imagination. During periods of maximum glacial expansion, a carpet of ice as thick as thirteen thousand feet extended over most of Canada and crept southward into what is now New England, New York State, and much of the Midwest.

Like the slow but relentless shaping of the planet itself, the origins of the human species extend back to the mists of prehistoric time. More than 5 million years ago, direct human ancestors evolved in the temperate grasslands of Africa. Between three hundred thousand and one hundred thousand years ago, humans began migrating throughout the Eastern Hemisphere. During the last glaciation, which geologists term Wisconsin, hunting bands pursuing large game animals moved

## Volcanic Eruption, Hawaii





from Central Asia into Siberia. Between forty thousand and fifteen thousand years ago, most scientists believe, some of these bands crossed the broad land bridge then connecting Siberia to Alaska. In so doing, they became the first Americans.

While the earth has been relatively stable during the last few thousand years, earthquakes in California and elsewhere remind us that the continents continue to drift and that the world as we know it is not static but in a state of steady change.

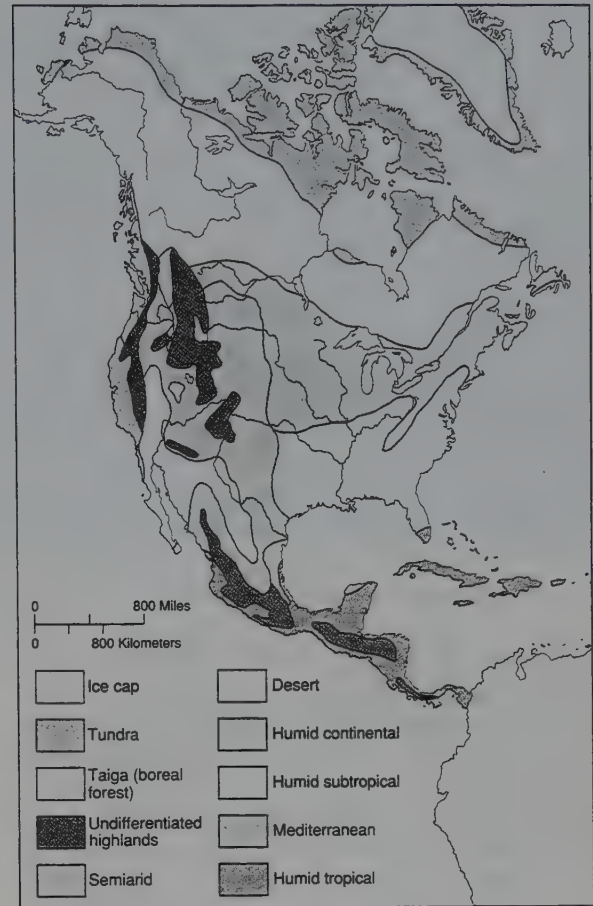
## The Continent and Its Regions

As the glacial ice melted, raising the world's oceans to their present levels, North America slowly warmed. The ensuing differences in climate, physical features, and organic life were the basis of America's extraordinary geographic diversity. Geographic diversity contributed, in turn, to the remarkable diversity of regional cultures that later emerged, first among American Indians and then among the nonnative peoples who settled in America after Columbus's voyages. Geographic variety also contributed to the United States' rise to political and economic preeminence in the modern world.

### *The West*

With its severe climate and profuse wildlife, Alaska still evokes the land that ancient North America's earliest migrants discovered. Indeed, Alaska's far north resembles a world from which ice caps have just retreated—a treeless tundra of grasses, lichens, and stunted shrubs. This region, the Arctic, is a stark wilderness in winter, reborn in fleeting summers of colorful flowers and returning birds. In contrast, the subarctic of central Alaska and Canada is a heavily forested country known as taiga. Here rises North America's highest peak, 20,320-foot Mt. McKinley, or Denali. Average temperatures in the subarctic range from the fifties above zero in summer to well below zero in the long, dark winters, and the soil is permanently frozen except during summer surface thaws.

The expanse from Alaska's glacier-gouged and ruggedly mountainous Pacific shore southward to northern California forms the Pacific Northwest. Only a few natural harbors break the shoreline, but they include the magnificent anchorages of Puget Sound and San Francisco Bay. Offshore, cool currents and warm winds make possible rich coastal fisheries.



**North American Climatic Regions**

The Pacific coastal region is in some ways a world apart. Vegetation and animal life, isolated from the rest of the continent by mountains and deserts, include many species unfamiliar farther east. Warm, wet westerly winds blowing off the Pacific create a climate more uniformly temperate than anywhere else in North America. From Anchorage and the Alaska panhandle to a little south of San Francisco Bay, winters are cool, humid, and foggy, and the coast's dense forest cover includes the largest living organisms on earth, the giant redwood trees. Along the southern California coast, winds and currents generate a warmer, "Mediterranean" climate, and vegetation includes a heavy growth of shrubs and short trees, scattered stands of oak, and grasses able to endure prolonged seasonal drought.

The rugged Sierra Nevada, Cascade, and coastal ranges stretch the length of British Columbia, Washing-





### **Douglas Firs, Washington State**

*The impact of clear-cutting timber to meet worldwide demand for wood is made vividly clear in this photograph.*

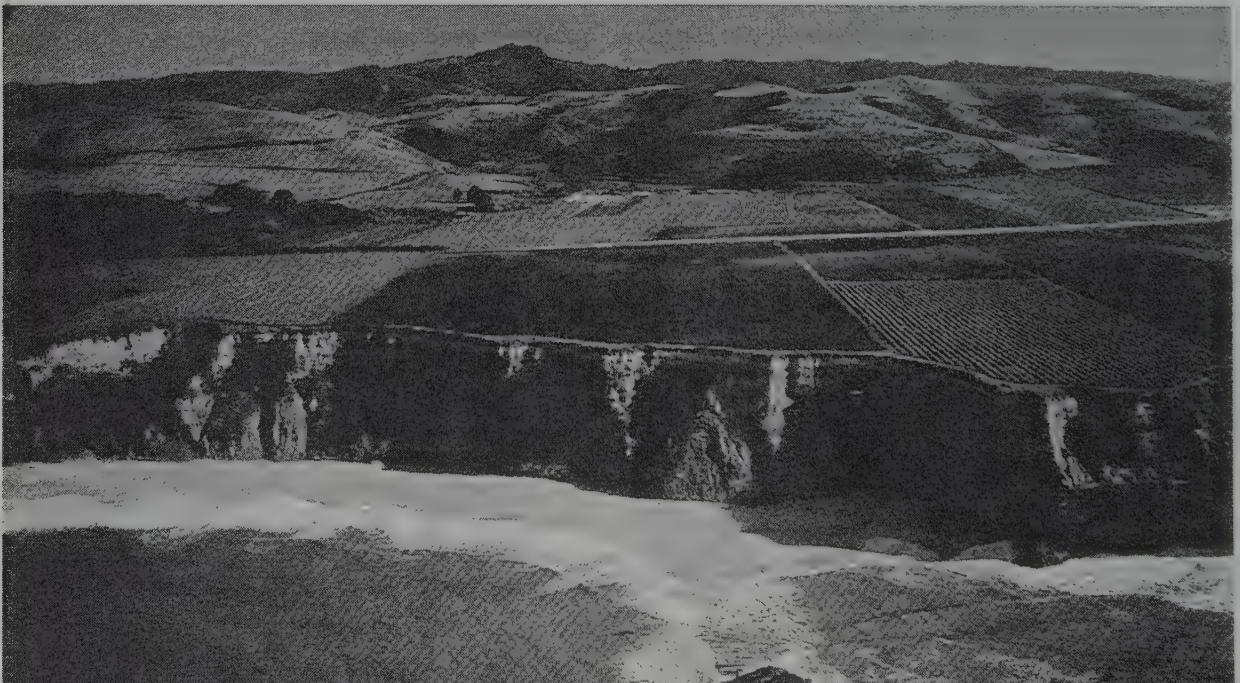
ton, Oregon, and California. Their majestic peaks trap abundant Pacific Ocean moisture that gigantic clockwise air currents carry eastward. Between the ranges nestle flat, fertile valleys—California's Central Valley (formed by the San Joaquin and Sacramento rivers), Oregon's Willamette Valley, and the Puget Sound region in Washington—that have become major agricultural centers in recent times.

Well east of the Pacific coastal band lies the Great Basin, encompassing Nevada, western Utah, southern Idaho, and eastern Oregon. The few streams here have no outlet to the sea. Much of the Great Basin was once covered by an inland sea holding glacial meltwater, a remnant of which survives in Utah's Great Salt Lake. Today, however, the Great Basin is dry and severely eroded, a cold desert rich in minerals, imposing in its austere grandeur and lonely emptiness. North of the basin, the Columbia and Snake rivers, which drain the plateau country of Idaho and eastern Washington and Oregon, provide plentiful water for farming.

Western North America's "backbone" is the Rocky Mountains. In turn, the Rockies form part of the immense mountain system that reaches from Alaska to the Andes of South America. Elevations in the Rockies rise from a mile above sea level in Denver at the foot of the mountains to permanently snowcapped peaks more than fourteen thousand feet above sea level. Beyond the front range of the Rockies lies the Continental Divide, the watershed separating the rivers flowing eastward into the Atlantic from those draining westward into the Pacific. The climate and vegetation of the Rocky Mountain high country resemble Arctic and subarctic types.

Arizona, southern Utah, western New Mexico, and southeastern California form America's southwestern desert. The climate is arid, searingly hot on summer

### **Coastal Farming Belt, Northern California**





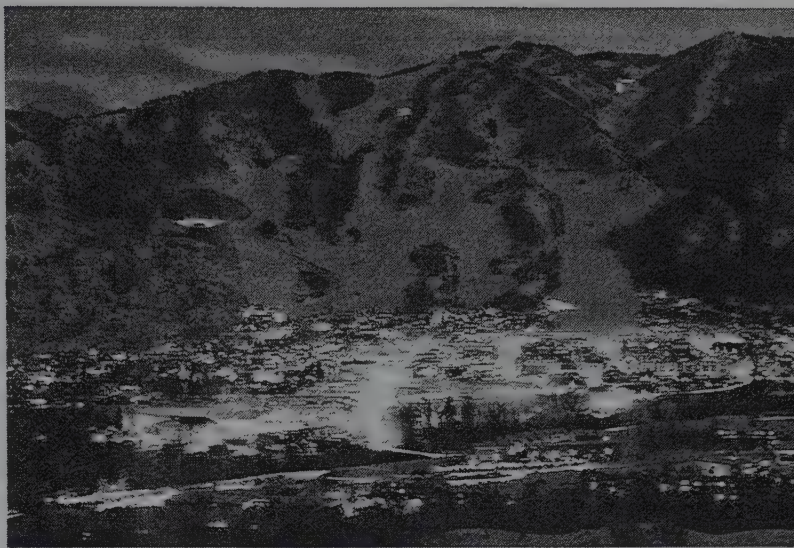
days and cold on winter nights. Adapted to stringent environmental conditions, many plants and animals that thrive here could not survive elsewhere. Dust storms, cloudbursts, and flash floods have everywhere carved, abraded, and twisted the rocky landscape. Nature's fantastic sculpture appears on the most monumental scale in the Grand Canyon, where for 20 million years the Colorado River has been cutting down to Precambrian bedrock.

In the face of such tremendous natural forces, human activity might well seem paltry and transitory. Yet here the first crop cultivation began in what is now the continental United States.

### *The Heartland*

North America's heartland comprises the area extending eastward from the Rockies to the Appalachians. This vast region forms one of the world's largest drainage systems. From it the Great Lakes empty into the North Atlantic through the St. Lawrence River, and the Mississippi-Missouri-Ohio river network flows southward into the Gulf of Mexico. Where the drainage system originates, at the northern and western reaches of the Great Lakes region, lie some of the world's richest deposits of iron and copper ore. In our own time, the heartland's waterways have offered a splendid means of carrying this mineral wealth to nearby coal-producing areas for processing but in so doing have spawned widespread environmental pollution.

The Mississippi—the “Father of Waters” to nearby Algonquian-speaking Indians, and one of the world's longest rivers—carries a prodigious volume of water



### **Night View of Aspen, Colorado**

*By the late twentieth century, even outdoor recreation has an enormous effect on the environment.*

### **Lakes and Marshes in the Great Basin During the Last Ice Age**

*The Great Basin's extensive lakes and marshes during the last Ice Age contrast starkly with the diminished amount of surface water in the region today.*



Source: W. F. Ruddiman and H. E. Wright, Jr., eds. “North America and Adjacent Oceans During the Last Deglaciation.” *The Geology of North America K-3* (1987): 241.

### **Bonneville, Salt Flats, Utah**





## Present-Day U.S. Agriculture, Industry, and Resources



### Mississippi River Flood, 1993, at Davenport, Iowa

*The river's most severe floods disrupt human routines in cities as well as in the countryside.*



and silt. It has changed course many times in geological history. The lower Mississippi (below the junction with the Ohio River) meanders constantly. In the process, the river deposits rich sediments throughout its broad, ancient floodplain. Indeed, the Mississippi has carried so much silt over the millennia that in its lower stretches, the river flows *above* the surrounding valley, which it catastrophically floods when its high banks (levees) are breached. Over millions of years, such riverborne sediment covered what was once the westward extension of the Appalachians in northern Mississippi and eastern Arkansas. Only the Ozark Plateau and Ouachita Mountains remain exposed, forming the hill country of southern Missouri, north-central Arkansas, and eastern Oklahoma. These uplands have evolved into an economically and culturally distinctive region—beautiful but isolated and impoverished.

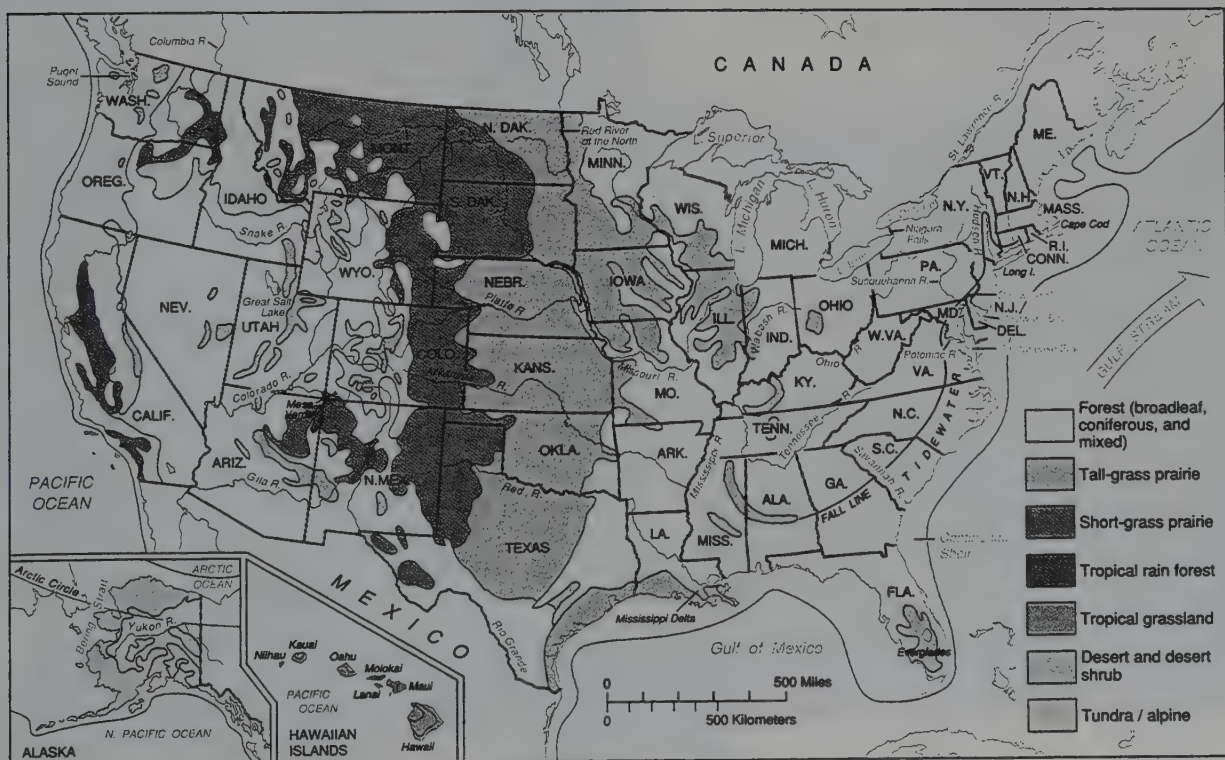
Below New Orleans the Mississippi empties into the Gulf of Mexico through an enormous delta with an intricate network of grassy swamps known as bayous. The Mississippi Delta offers rich farm soil, capable of supporting a large population. Swarming with water-





Above, Physiographic Map of the United States

Below, Natural Vegetation of the United States



fowl, insects, alligators, and marine plants and animals, this environment has nurtured a distinctive way of life for the Indian, white, and black peoples who have inhabited it.

North of the Ohio and Missouri rivers, themselves products of glacial runoff, Ice Age glaciation molded the American heartland. Because the local terrain was generally flat prior to glaciation, the ice sheets distributed glacial debris quite evenly. Spread even farther by wind and rivers, this fine-ground glacial dust slowly created the fertile farm soil of the Midwest. Glaciers also dug out the five Great Lakes (Superior, Huron, Michigan, Ontario, and Erie), collectively the world's largest body of fresh water. Water flowing from Lake Erie to the lower elevation of Lake Ontario created Niagara Falls, comparable only to the Grand Canyon as testimony to nature's power.

Most of the heartland's eastern and northern sectors were once heavily forested. To the west thick, tall-grass prairie covered Illinois and parts of adjoining states, as well as much of the Missouri River basin and the middle Arkansas River basin (Oklahoma and central Texas). Beyond the Missouri the prairie gave way to

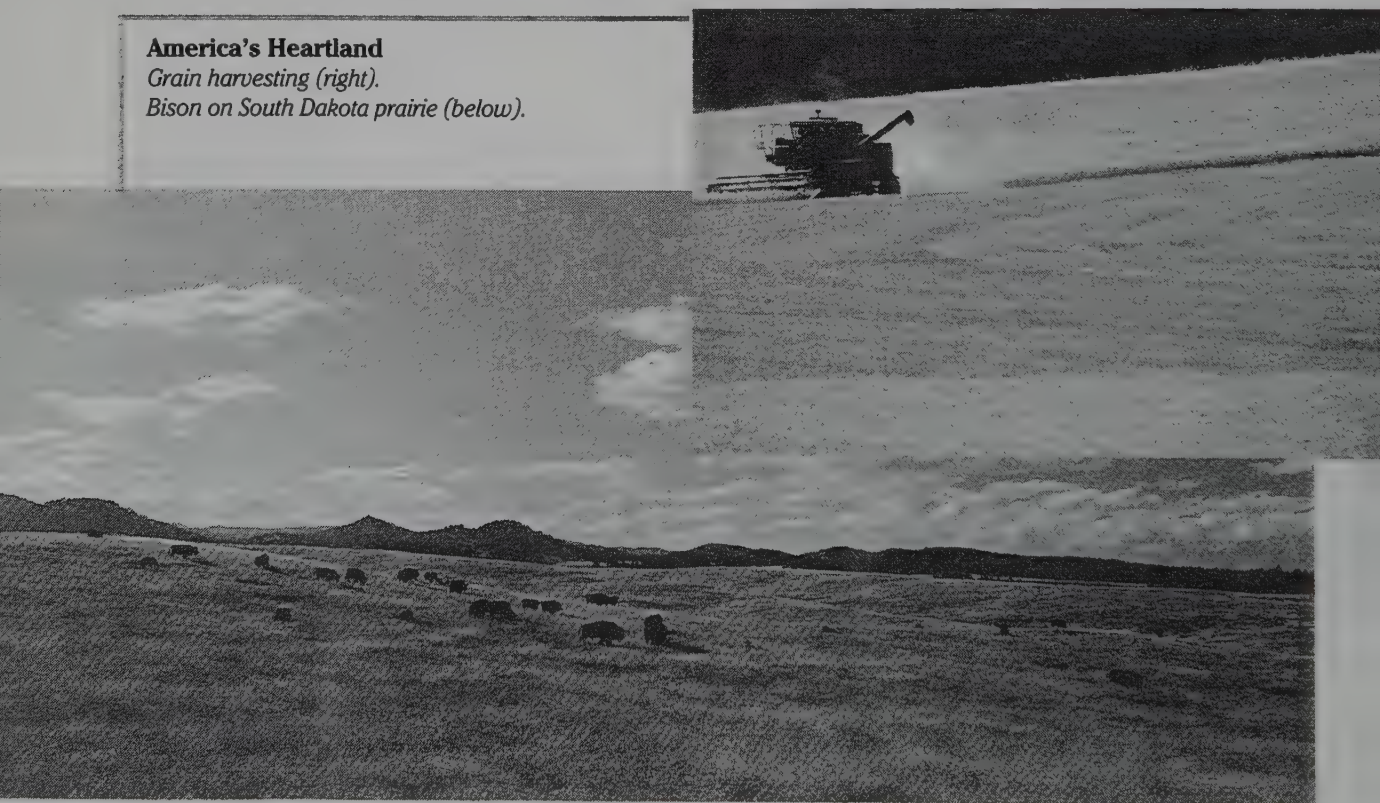
short-grass steppe—the Great Plains, cold in winter, blazing hot in summer, and always dry. The great distances that separate the heartland's prairies and Great Plains from the moderating effects of the oceans have made this region's annual temperature range the most extreme in North America. As the traveler moves westward, elevations rise gradually, winds howl ceaselessly, trees grow only along streambeds, long droughts alternate with violent thunderstorms and tornadoes, and water and wood are ever scarcer.

Now much of this forested, grassy world is forever altered. The heartland has become open farming country. Gone are the flocks of migratory birds that once darkened the daytime skies of the plains; gone are the free-roaming bison. Forests now only fringe the heartland: in the lake country of northern Minnesota and Wisconsin, on Michigan's upper peninsula, and across the hilly uplands of the Appalachians, southern Indiana, and the Ozarks. The settlers who displaced the region's Indian inhabitants have done most of the plowing up of prairie grass and felling of trees since the early nineteenth century. Destruction of the forest and grassy cover has made the Midwest both a "breadbasket" for

### **America's Heartland**

*Grain harvesting (right).*

*Bison on South Dakota prairie (below).*





the world market and, during intervals of drought, a bleak “dust bowl.”

### ***The Atlantic Seaboard***

The eastern edge of the heartland is marked by the ancient Appalachian Mountain chain, which over the course of 200 million years has been ground down to gentle ridges paralleling one another southwest to northeast. Between the ridges lie fertile valleys such as Virginia's Shenandoah. The Appalachian hill country's wealth is in thick timber and mineral beds—particularly the Paleozoic coal deposits—whose heavy exploitation since the nineteenth century has accelerated destructive soil erosion in this softly beautiful, mountainous land.

Descending gently from the Appalachians' eastern slope is the piedmont (“foot of the mountain”). In this broad, rolling upland extending from Alabama to Maryland, the rich red soil has been ravaged in modern times by excessive cotton and tobacco cultivation. The piedmont's modern piney-woods cover constitutes “secondary growth” replacing the sturdy hardwood trees that Native Americans and pioneering whites and blacks once knew. The northward extension of the piedmont from Pennsylvania to New England has more broadleaf vegetation, a harsher winter climate, and

(through the Hudson and Connecticut river valleys) somewhat better access to the piedmont itself. But unlike the piedmont, upstate New York and New England were shaped by glaciation: the terrain here comprises hills contoured by advancing and retreating ice, and numerous lakes scoured out by glaciers. Belts of debris remain, and in many places granite boulders shoulder their way up through the soil. Though picturesque, the land is the despair of anyone who has tried to plow it.

From southeastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island to south-central Alabama runs the fall line, the boundary between the relatively hard rock of the interior and the softer sediment of the coastal plain. Rivers crossing the fall line drop quickly to near sea level, thus making a series of rapids that block navigation upstream from the coast.

The character of the Atlantic coastal plain varies strikingly from south to north. In the extreme south, at the tip of the Florida peninsula, the climate and vegetation are subtropical. The southern coastal lands running north from Florida to Chesapeake Bay and the mouth of the Delaware River compose the tidewater region. This is a wide, rather flat lowland, heavily wooded with a mixture of broadleaf and coniferous forests, ribbed with numerous small rivers, occasionally swampy, and often miserably hot and humid in summer. North of Delaware Bay, the coastal lowlands nar-

#### **Cades Cove, Great Smoky Mountains (*right*) Tennessee Strip Mining (*below*)**

*The impact of human hands is dramatically apparent in these two starkly contrasting Appalachian hill country scenes.*







Saltwater Marsh, Outer Banks, North Carolina

The Tip of Cape Cod, Massachusetts (*below*)



Oyster Men, Chesapeake Bay, Maryland

row and flatten to form the New Jersey pine barrens, Long Island, and Cape Cod—all of these created by the deposit of glacial debris. Here the climate is noticeably milder than in the interior. North of Massachusetts Bay, the land back of the immediate shoreline becomes increasingly mountainous.

Many large rivers drain into the Atlantic: the St. Lawrence, flowing out of the Great Lakes northeast-

ward through eastern Canada; the Connecticut in New England; the Hudson, Delaware, Susquehanna, and Potomac in what are now the Middle Atlantic states; the Savannah in the South. Most of these originally carried glacial meltwater. The Susquehanna and the Potomac filled in the broad, shallow Chesapeake Bay, teeming with marine life and offering numerous anchorages for oceangoing ships.

North America's true eastern edge is not the coastline but the offshore continental shelf, whose relatively shallow waters extend as far as 250 miles into the Atlantic before plunging deeply. Along the rocky Canadian and Maine coasts, where at the end of the Ice Age the rising ocean half-covered glaciated mountains and valleys, oceangoing craft may find numerous small anchorages. South of Massachusetts Bay, the Atlantic shore and the Gulf of Mexico coastline form a shoreline of sandy beaches and long barrier islands paralleling the mainland. Tropical storms boiling up from the open seas regularly lash North America's Atlantic shores, and at all times brisk winds make coastal navigation treacherous.



Crossing the Atlantic east to west can daunt even skilled mariners, particularly those battling against powerful winds by sail. Here, on one of the world's stormiest seas, the mighty Gulf Stream current sweeps from southwest to northeast. Winds off the North American mainland also trend steadily eastward, and dangerous icebergs floating south from Greenland's waters threaten every ship. Little wonder that in 1620 the *Mayflower* Pilgrims' first impulse on landing was to sink to their knees in thanks to God for having transported them safely across "the vast and furious ocean." Many a vessel went to the bottom.

But for millions, the Atlantic coastal region of North America offered a welcoming haven to settlers. For example, ten thousand years ago, ancient Indian hunters followed a warming climate eastward across the Appalachians to the coast. During the first millennium A.D., eastern peoples adopted the Woodland culture and agriculture of the heartland. Offshore, well within their reach, lay such productive fishing grounds as the Grand Banks and Cape Cod's coastal bays, where cool-water upwellings on the continental shelf had lured swarms of fish and crustaceans. "The abundance of sea-fish are almost beyond believing," wrote a breathless English settler in 1630, "and sure I should scarce have believed it, except I had seen it with my own eyes."

## A Legacy and a Challenge

At least three thousand miles of open sea separates North America from Europe and Africa; and Asia, except for the subarctic region where Alaska and Siberia once joined, lies even more distant.

A lingering sense of isolation stimulated European-descended Americans' hopes of keeping "Old World" problems away from the pristine "New World," just as North America's fertile soil, extensive forests, and rich mineral resources long conjured up visions of limitless wealth. But population growth, intensive agriculture,



**Pemigewasset Wilderness, White Mountains, New Hampshire**

industrialization, urbanization, and a hunger for consumer goods have stretched to the limits the American land's ability to maintain a modern society without irreversible ecological damage. And only in the twentieth century did Americans learn that global transportation networks and instantaneous communication make isolation impossible. At last, as ecologist Aldo Leopold put it, they began discovering that the earth's people "are only fellow voyagers in the odyssey of evolution." And that lesson has been hard learned. "It required 19 centuries to define decent man-to-man conduct and the process is only half-done," Leopold admonished; "it may take as long to evolve a code of decency for man-to-land conduct."

It is in evolving such a code, however, that the Native American legacy may yet prove most enduring. Interacting constantly with their physical environments, Indians considered themselves spiritually related to the land and all living beings that shared it. In recapturing a sense that the land—its life-sustaining bounty and its soul-sustaining beauty—is itself of inestimable value and not merely a means to the end of material growth, future American generations may reestablish a sense of historical and cultural continuity with their Native American precursors. Thereby they can truly be possessed by their land instead of simply being its possessors.



# America Begins

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**Woman Grinding Maize**, Stone Effigy Pipe, Spiro Mound,  
Oklahoma c. A.D. 1250–1500





**H** iawatha had known the depths of despair. For years his people, the group of Indian nations known as the Iroquois, had been beset by a destructive, seemingly endless cycle of violence and revenge. Families, villages, and nations fought one another, and neighboring Indians attacked relentlessly. When Hiawatha tried to restore peace among his own Onondaga people, an evil sorcerer who opposed peace caused the deaths of his seven beloved daughters. Grief-stricken and angry, Hiawatha wandered alone into the forest. After several days he reached the shore of a lake, where he experienced a series of visions. First he saw a flock of wild ducks suddenly fly up from the lake, taking the water with them. Hiawatha walked onto the dry lake bed, gathering and stringing the beautiful purple and white shells that lay there. He saw the shells, called wampum, as symbolic “words” of condolence that, when properly presented, would soothe grief, no matter how intense. Then he met a holy man named Deganawidah (“the Peacemaker”), who presented him with the beads and spoke the appropriate words, one to dry his weeping eyes, another to open his ears to the words of peace and reason, a third to clear his throat so that he himself could once again speak peacefully and reasonably. Deganawidah and Hiawatha then took the wampum to the five Iroquois nations. To each they introduced the ritual of condolence as a new message of peace. The Iroquois subsequently submerged their differences and created a council of chiefs and a confederacy, based on the condolence ritual. Thus was born the powerful League of the Iroquois.

Although it is an oral tradition couched in spiritual language, the story of Hiawatha and Deganawidah depicts a concrete event in American history. Archaeological evidence at Iroquois sites corroborates the sequence of bloody warfare followed by peace and dates

the league’s origins at some time between the late-fourteenth and the mid-fifteenth century. As with all of American history before the arrival of Europeans and their system of writing, archaeological evidence and oral traditions, examined critically, are our principal sources of knowledge about the past. In this case the story refers to an event of importance not only for pre-Columbian history but for the period of European contact with Native Americans as well. For the Iroquois Confederacy was a significant diplomatic and military force throughout the colonial period and has inspired and intrigued many non-Indians down to the present, despite the fact that it was established prior to, and entirely independently of, the Europeans’ arrival.

The founding of the League of the Iroquois marked just one moment in a long history that began more than ten thousand years before Christopher Columbus’s first voyage. Over that time an indigenous American history unfolded, one characterized by cultural diversity and by extensive interactions among communities. Some native peoples eked out their existences in precarious environments, whereas others enjoyed affluence and prosperity; some lived in small bands, whereas others lived in large cities; some believed that the first humans came from the sky, whereas others maintained that they originated underground. Wherever and however they lived and whatever they believed, native peoples together made North America a human habitat and gave it a history.

This chapter will focus on three major questions:

- ◆ What was the relationship between environmental changes in North America and cultural changes among its Indian inhabitants?
- ◆ What were the nature and consequences of Native American communities’ interactions and exchanges with one another?



**Iroquois canoe model**

- ◆ What basic values did Native Americans have in common despite the vast cultural differences that often separated them? How would these shared values compare with those of the Europeans who arrived after 1500?

## The First Americans

Precisely when and how the vast Western Hemisphere was first peopled remains uncertain. The most widely accepted theory is that sometime during the last Ice Age, bands of Siberian hunters crossed the expanse of land still linking North America and Asia in the far northern Pacific (see Prologue). Drifting southward from the glacier-covered north, they discovered a hunter's paradise. Giant mammoths, mastodons, horses, camels, bison, caribou, and moose, as well as smaller species, roamed the continent innocent of the ways of human predators. By 9000 B.C. the Paleo-Indians, as archaeologists call these hunters, had dispersed throughout the Western Hemisphere.

Most Native Americans are descended from these earliest migrants. A few, however, trace their lineage to later arrivals. About nine thousand years ago, Athapaskan-speaking peoples likewise crossed from northeastern Asia and spread over much of northern and western Canada and southern and central Alaska. Some of them later migrated southward to form the Apaches and Navajos in the Southwest, as well as smaller groups elsewhere. Eskimos and Aleuts began crossing the Bering Sea—which had submerged the land bridge—from Siberia between five thousand and four thousand years ago, and the Hawaiian Islands remained uninhabited until after A.D. 300.

### *The Peopling of North America*

Paleo-Indians established some of the foundations upon which their Native American descendants would

build families and communities over the next twelve thousand years. Archaeologists surmise that Paleo-Indians dwelled in bands of about fifteen to fifty people. The men hunted; the women prepared the food and cared for the children. Members of a band lived together during the spring and summer and split into smaller groups of one or two families for the fall and winter. Although they moved constantly, they generally remained within informally defined boundaries. An exception occurred when they traveled to favored quarries to obtain jasper or flint for making tools and spear points. At such sites they encountered other bands, with whom they exchanged ideas and goods, intermarried, and participated in religious ceremonies. By such means, Paleo-Indians developed a cultural life that transcended their small bands.

Around 9000 B.C. many of the prized big-game species such as the mammoths and mastodons became extinct. The effectiveness of the Paleo-Indian hunters may have contributed to this demise, but the animals were also doomed by the warming climate, which brought ecological changes that undermined the food chain on which they depended. In other words, the replacement of the big-game mammals by humans marked part of a larger process of ecological change associated with the end of the Ice Age.

### *Archaic Societies*

The warming of the earth's atmosphere continued until about 4000 B.C., with far-reaching effects on the North American continent. Sea levels rose, flooding shallow offshore areas, and glacial runoff in the interior filled the Great Lakes, the Mississippi River basin, and other waterways. As the glaciers receded northward, so did the arctic and subarctic environments that had previously extended far into what are now the "lower 48" states of the United States. Treeless plains and evergreen forests gave way to deciduous forests in the East, grassland prairies on the Plains, and desert in much of



## CHRONOLOGY

**c. 10,000–9000 B.C.** Paleo-Indians spread throughout Western Hemisphere.

**c. 9000 B.C.** Extinction of big-game mammals.

**c. 8000 B.C.** Archaic era begins.

**c. 7000 B.C.** Athapaskan-speaking peoples arrive in North America.

**c. 5000 B.C.** First domesticated plants grown in Western Hemisphere.

**c. 3500 B.C.** First domesticated plants grown in North America.

**c. 3000–2000 B.C.** Inuit and Aleut peoples arrive in North America.

**c. 1500 B.C.** Archaic era ends.

Bow and arrow and ceramic pottery introduced in North America.

**c. 1200 B.C.** Poverty Point flourishes in Louisiana.

**c. 400–100 B.C.** Adena culture flourishes in Ohio Valley.

**c. 250 B.C.** Hohokam culture begins in Southwest.

**c. 100 B.C.** Anasazi culture begins in Southwest.

**c. 100 B.C.–A.D. 600** Hopewell culture thrives in Midwest.

**c. A.D. 300** First people arrive at Hawaiian Islands.

**c. A.D. 700** Mississippian culture begins.

**c. A.D. 900** Stockade and first mounds built at Cahokia. Anasazi expansion begins.

**c. A.D. 1000–1100** Norse settlement of Vinland flourishes on Newfoundland.

**c. A.D. 1150** Anasazi peoples disperse to form pueblos.

**c. A.D. 1200–1300** Cahokia declines.

**c. A.D. 1400** League of the Iroquois formed.

**A.D. 1492** Christopher Columbus begins permanent European colonization of Western Hemisphere.

the West. An immense range of flora and fauna, both on land and in the waters, came to characterize the American landscape. We are familiar with many of these same plants and animals today.

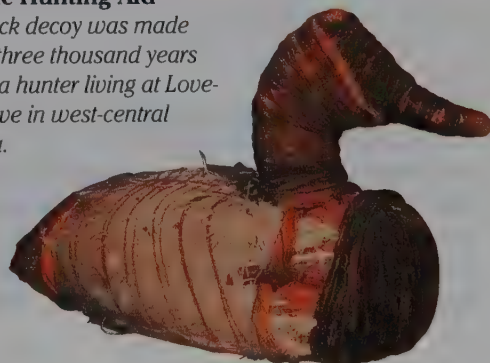
Whereas Paleo-Indians had focused most of their food gathering energy on big game, Archaic peoples, as archaeologists term native North Americans from c. 8000 B.C. to 1500 B.C., lived off wide varieties of smaller mammals, fish, and wild plants. As they used the resources of their environments more efficiently, their communities required less land area and could support larger populations. Although hunting-gathering bands in the Great Basin and Southwest changed little from Paleo-Indian times, many people in the East and Midwest now resided in villages with larger populations for all or most of the year. For example, a year-round village that flourished near Kampsville, Illinois, from 3900 to 2800 B.C., supported 100 to 150 people. It could do so because the residents knew how and when to procure fish and mussels from local lakes, in addition to the deer and other mammals, birds, nuts, and seeds available in the surrounding area.

Archaic peoples diversified other aspects of their lives as well. Besides using many more varieties of stone, they utilized bone, shell, copper, horn, ivory, as-

phalt, clay, and leather to make such objects as tools, weapons, utensils, and ornaments. Although many of these materials were available locally, Native Americans obtained others through exchanges, both with neighbors and through long-distance trade networks. Archaeological evidence gives some indication of the extent and importance of long-distance trade. Obsidian (a glassy black volcanic rock) from the Yellowstone region, copper from the Great Lakes, and marine shells from the coasts appear at sites hundreds and even thousands of miles from their points of origin. A few large

### Archaic Hunting Aid

*This duck decoy was made two to three thousand years ago by a hunter living at Lovelock Cave in west-central Nevada.*



sites, among them Indian Knoll in western Kentucky, which dates to 2500–2000 B.C., served as major centers of interregional trade.

Trade networks were routes not only for materials but also for ideas about their uses. By means of these pathways, the techniques developed in one locale for making material objects, procuring food, or utilizing the medicinal properties of plants were carried to other areas, overriding the narrow boundaries of community, language, and ethnicity. Out of such diffusions of ideas arose regional cultural patterns (see below). Trade also served to spread religious beliefs, as exemplified in ideas and practices relating to death. Human burials became more elaborate during the Archaic era as Native Americans in many regions buried the dead with their personal possessions as well as with objects fashioned from obsidian, copper, shell, and other highly valued substances. They often sprinkled the flexed corpses with bright red hematite, a source of iron, so that they resembled a baby at birth. Ideas of death as a kind of rebirth remained widespread in North America at the time Europeans began arriving many centuries later.

Over time, Archaic Americans sharpened many of the distinctions between women's and men's roles. Men took responsibility for fishing as well as hunting, whereas women harvested and prepared the products of wild plants, including the grinding and milling of seeds. Men and women each made the tools needed for their tasks. In general, men's activities entailed travel, and women's activities kept them close to the village, where they bore and raised children. These role distinctions are apparent in the burials at Indian Knoll, where tools relating to hunting, fishing, woodworking, and leatherworking were usually buried with men and those relating to nut cracking and seed grinding with women. Yet gender-specific distinctions by no means applied to all activities, for objects used by shamans, or religious healers, were distributed equally between male and female graves.

## The Indians' Continent

By 1500 B.C. Indians in parts of North America were shaping new ways of life and new institutions, transcending the Archaic cultures developed over the preceding millennia. Most post-Archaic Americans remained in small bands consisting of a few families and

continued to rely on combinations of hunting, fishing, and gathering. But others developed more specialized methods of food production and more actively shaped their environments to their own needs. In the Southwest, the Southeast, and the Northeast the advent of agriculture and of large centers of trade and population marked a radical departure from Archaic patterns and from the foraging way of life still followed by Indians in other regions.

Despite the discrepancies emerging among native societies, the ties between them grew strong. Trade networks carrying goods and ideas over geographic distances and across linguistic, ethnic, and cultural divides continued to proliferate. In this way the bow and arrow and ceramic pottery spread throughout the Americas, from the smallest bands to the largest cities. And Indians virtually everywhere retained their preferences for seasonal food procurement and for living in communities based on kinship, often abandoning or resisting more centralized systems that proved unworkable or oppressive.

### *The Northern and Western Perimeters*

In western Alaska, where the first Americans had arrived thousands of years earlier, the post-Archaic period marked the beginning of a new way of life. The Eskimos and Aleuts had brought highly sophisticated tools and weapons from their Siberian homeland. Combining ivory, bone, and other materials, they fashioned harpoons and spears for the pursuit of sea mammals and—in the case of the Eskimos—caribou. Through their continued contacts with Siberia, the Eskimos made and used the first bows and arrows, the first ceramic pottery, and the first pit houses (structures set partially below ground level) in the Americas. As they perfected their ways of living in the cold tundra environment, many Eskimos spread across upper Canada to the shores of Labrador, western Newfoundland, and Greenland.

Long before the arrival of Columbus, the Eskimos made contact with Europeans and used some of their material goods. From about A.D. 1, a few iron tools were reaching western Alaska by way of Russia and Siberia. However, they were too few in number to affect Eskimo culture in any substantial way. Contacts with Europeans were more direct and sustained in areas of Greenland, Newfoundland, and Labrador, where Norse people from Scandinavia attempted to colonize,





### Major Language Groups of North American Indians and Locations of Selected Peoples, A.D. 1500

Most of the several hundred languages spoken by North American native peoples on the eve of European colonization were derived from just a dozen basic language groups. (Source: Dean Snow, *The Archaeology of North America: American Indians and Their Origins* (London: Thames and Hudson, Ltd., 1976)).

beginning in the late tenth century A.D. The Norse exchanged metal goods for ivory with the Eskimos and with the Beothuk Indians near their settlement in Newfoundland. But peaceful trade gave way to hostile encounters. By the eleventh century the native peoples' resistance to the newcomers' colonizing ambitions led the Norse to withdraw from Vinland, as they called

Newfoundland. As a Norse leader, dying after losing a battle with some natives, put it, "There is fat around my belly! We have won a fine and fruitful country, but will hardly be allowed to enjoy it." Several more centuries would pass before Europeans would enjoy, at the expense of native peoples, the fruits of a "New World."



### Haida Grease Dish, c. 1700

*Northwest Coast artists crafted even the most seemingly mundane objects with an eye for beauty and form.*

Along the Pacific coast, from Alaska to southern California, improvements in the production and storage of certain key foods enabled Indians to develop more settled ways of life. On the Northwest coast, from the Alaskan panhandle to northern California, and in the Columbia Plateau, natives devoted brief periods of each year to catching salmon and other spawning fish. After drying the fish, the Northwest Coast Indians stored it in quantities sufficient to last the year round. As a result, their seasonal movements gave way to a settled lifestyle in permanent villages consisting of cedar-plank houses. Plateau Indians constructed villages of pit houses where they subsisted on salmon through the summer. They left the villages in spring and fall for hunting and gathering.

By A.D. 1 many villages on the Northwest coast numbered several hundred people. Trade and warfare with interior groups strengthened the power of chiefs and other leading figures, whose families were distinguished from those of commoners by their wealth and prestige. These leading families proclaimed their status most conspicuously in elaborate totem poles depicting supernatural beings supposedly linked to their ancestors and in potlatches, ceremonies in which they gave away or destroyed much of their material wealth. From the time of the earliest contacts, Europeans were awestruck by the artistic and architectural achievements of the Northwest Coast Indians. "What must astonish most," wrote a French explorer in 1791, "is to see paint-

ing everywhere, everywhere sculpture, among a nation of hunters."

At about the same time as native peoples in the Northwest, Indians on the coast and in the interior valleys of what is now California also became more settled. Residing in villages of about one hundred people, they devoted extensive time and effort to processing acorns. After the fall harvest, the Indians ground the acorns into meal, leached them of their bitter tannic acid, and then roasted, boiled, or baked the nuts prior to eating or storing them. In the face of intense competition for acorns, native Californians defined territorial boundaries more rigidly than elsewhere in pre-Columbian North America and combined several villages under the leadership of a single chief. The chiefs conducted trade, diplomacy, and religious ceremonies with neighboring groups and,

when necessary, led their people in battle. Along with the resources of game, fish, and plants available to them, acorns enabled the Indians of California to prosper. As a Spanish friar arriving in California from Mexico in 1770 wrote, "This land exceeds all the preceding territory in fertility and abundance of things necessary for sustenance."

### Chumash Baskets

*California Indians, including the Chumash, gathered, prepared, and stored acorns and other foods in baskets crafted by specialized weavers.*





The end of the Archaic period is less noticeable in the Great Basin than almost anywhere else in North America. This region's warm, dry climate was almost as forbidding to humans as that of the frigid Arctic. Foraging bands continued to move over the area, depending primarily on hunting small mammals and harvesting seeds and piñon (pine) nuts. Little change occurred until about the fourteenth or fifteenth century A.D., when Paiute, Ute, and Shoshone Indians fanned over the Great Basin from their homeland in southeastern California, absorbing or displacing the earlier inhabitants. Although the newcomers' way of life was essentially the same as that of the older groups, their more efficient seed processing enabled them to support larger populations, which in turn occupied ever-larger territories.

### ***The Southwest***

Although the peoples of the Northwest coast and California cultivated tobacco, they never farmed food-bearing plants. With their abundant food sources, they had little incentive to hazard the additional risks that agriculture would have entailed, especially in California, with its dry summers. However, elsewhere in North America agriculture became central to Indian life. In the arid Southwest, natives concentrated much of their communities' energy on irrigation in order to feed themselves by farming. In the humid Eastern Woodlands, on the other hand, plant cultivation came more easily. But in both regions, the advent of agriculture was a long, slow process that never entirely displaced other food-procuring activities.

Farming began in the Western Hemisphere about 5000 B.C.—just as agriculture was being introduced to Europe from southwestern Asia—when Indians living in the Tehuacán Valley of central Mexico experimentally planted the seeds of certain wild plants they customarily harvested. Among these were squash, maize (corn), and eventually beans. Slowly, the techniques of plant domestication spread in all directions, reaching the Southwest by about 3500 B.C. But substantial changes in southwestern life began only after 400 B.C., when the introduction (probably from Mexico) of a more drought-resistant strain of maize enabled the inhabitants to move from the highlands to the drier lowlands. In the centuries that followed, populations rose, and native culture was transformed. The two most influential new cultural traditions were the Hohokam and the Anasazi.



#### **Mimbres Bowl, c. A.D. 1100**

*The women of Mimbres, in southwestern New Mexico, produced some of the finest pottery north of Mexico. This bowl depicts the guardians of the four cardinal directions, considered sacred in many Native American cultures.*

The Hohokam emerged during the third century B.C. when ancestors of the Pima and Tohono O'odham Indians began farming in the Gila River and Salt River valleys of southern Arizona. Hohokam peoples built elaborate canal systems for irrigation that enabled them to harvest two crops per year, an astonishing achievement in such an arid environment. To construct and maintain their canals, the Hohokam people needed large, coordinated work forces. They built permanent villages, usually consisting of several hundred people. Although many such villages remained independent, others joined confederations in which several towns were linked by canals. The central village in each confederation coordinated labor, trade, and religious and political life for all the communities connected to it.

Essentially a local creation, Hohokam culture nevertheless drew extensively on materials and ideas from outside the Southwest. From about the sixth century A.D., the large villages had ball courts and platform mounds like those found throughout Mexico at the time. As in Mexico, ball games were major public events in Hohokam villages. Although no evidence of their rules survives, they probably resembled the Mexican game, in which play was rough, players could not use their hands, and the losers relinquished some of



**Pueblo Bonito, Chaco Canyon, New Mexico**

*Pueblo Bonito illustrates the richness and grand scale of Anasazi architecture.*

their material possessions. Mexican influence was also apparent in the creations of Hohokam artists, who worked in clay, stone, turquoise, and shell. Archaeologists have unearthed such artifacts as rubber balls, macaw feathers, and copper bells among the Mexican items found at Hohokam sites. Artists used seashells from California in pottery, as backing for turquoise mosaics, and as material for intricate etchings.

Among the last southwesterners to take up farming were a people known as the Anasazi, a Navajo term meaning “ancient ones.” Their culture originated in the Four Corners area where Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, and Utah meet. By the sixth century A.D., the Anasazi people were only beginning to harvest beans, live in permanent villages with pit houses, and make pottery. Yet over the next six centuries, these ancestors of the modern Pueblo Indians expanded over a wide area and became the most powerful people in the Southwest.

One of the distinguishing characteristics of Anasazi culture was its architecture. Early Anasazi people lived in pit houses that featured underground storage cists, ventilator shafts, and small holes in the floor known as *sipapus*. The Anasazis and modern Pueblos maintain

that the first humans reached the earth from underground, following a long and tortuous journey through several underworlds. Symbolizing this journey, the *sipapu* was a sacred place in each family’s house. As village populations increased after the sixth century, often reaching one hundred or more houses, the Anasazis shifted to above-ground, rectangular apartments. However, they retained the form of the pit house in their *kivas*, round, partly underground structures in which the men held religious ceremonies. To this day Anasazi-style apartments and kivas are central features of Pueblo Indian architecture in the Southwest.

From the beginning of the tenth century to the middle of the twelfth, during an unusually wet period in the Southwest, the Anasazis expanded over much of what is today northern New Mexico and Arizona. The population of some villages grew to more than a thousand. In Chaco Canyon in present-day northwestern New Mexico, a cluster of twelve large towns forged a powerful confederation numbering about fifteen thousand people. A system of roads radiated out of the canyon to satellite towns located as far as sixty-five miles away. These roads were perfectly straight; their builders even carved out stairs or footholds in the sides of steep cliffs



rather than go around them. The largest of the towns, Pueblo Bonito, had about twelve hundred inhabitants and was the home of two Great Kivas, each about fifty feet in diameter. People traveled from the outlying towns to Chaco Canyon for religious rituals. In addition, the canyon was the center of a turquoise industry that manufactured beads for trade with Mexico. By controlling rainwater runoff through small dams, terraces, and other devices, the towns fed themselves as well as their satellites.

The classic Anasazi culture, as manifested at Chaco Canyon, Mesa Verde in southwestern Colorado, Canyon de Chelly in northeastern Arizona, and other sites, came to an end in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Although Chaco Canyon's somewhat earlier collapse may have been triggered by a cutoff of its turquoise trade with Mexico, the overriding cause of the Anasazi demise was drought. Suddenly, the amount of available farmland was drastically reduced for a population that had grown rapidly during the preceding centuries. The great Anasazi centers were abandoned as the inhabitants dispersed. Most formed new pueblos on or near the upper Rio Grande, whereas others moved south to establish the Zuni and Hopi pueblos. Descendants of the Anasazis still inhabit many of these pueblos. Other large agricultural communities, such as those of the Hohokam, also dispersed when drought came. With farming peoples now clustered in the few areas with enough water, the drier lands of the Southwest attracted the foraging Apaches and Navajos, whose arrival at the end of the fourteenth century ended their long migration from northwestern Canada.

### ***The Eastern Woodlands***

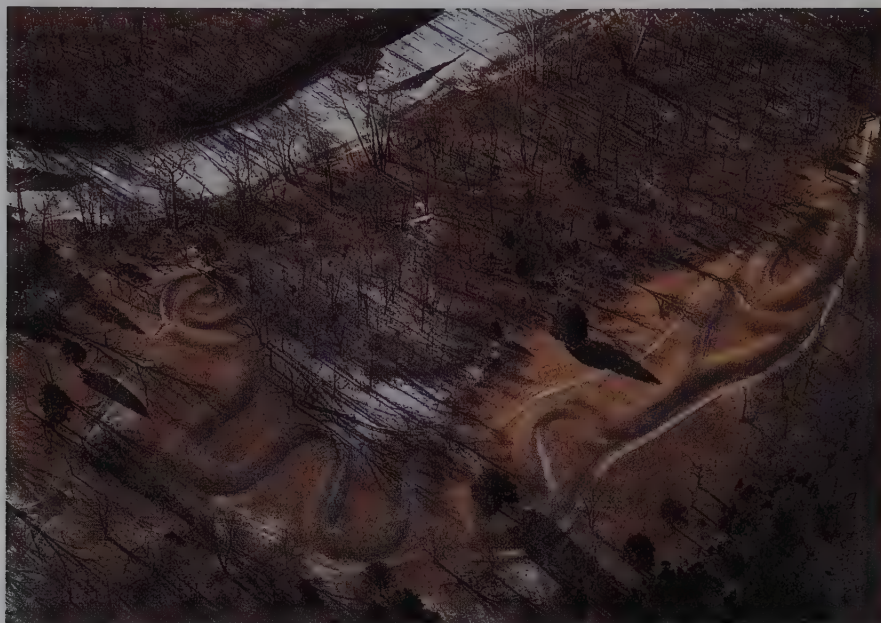
Whereas the Hohokam and Anasazi peoples built large villages and created centralized or confederated political systems as a consequence of deciding to farm for most of their food, natives on the Northwest coast and in California enlarged and consolidated their societies in the absence of agriculture. Nonfarming Indians in much of the Eastern Woodlands—that vast stretch of land from the Mississippi Valley to the Atlantic Ocean—likewise experimented with village life and political centralization without farming. But after doing so, they developed an extraordinarily productive agriculture.

In 1200 B. C. about five thousand people had concentrated in a single village at Poverty Point on the Mis-

issippi River in Louisiana. The village was flanked by two large constructed mounds and surrounded by six concentric embankments, the outermost of which spanned more than half a mile in diameter. During the spring and autumn equinoxes, a person standing on the larger mound could watch the sun rise directly over the village center. As with similar communities of the period in Mexico, solar observations were the basis for religious beliefs as well as for a calendar. Poverty Point also lay at the center of a much larger political and economic unit. The settlement imported large quantities of quartz, copper, obsidian, crystal, and other materials considered sacred from throughout eastern North America and then redistributed them to nearby communities. These communities almost certainly supplied some of the labor for the earthworks. Although Poverty Point was built by local inhabitants, its general design and organization suggest the influence of the Olmec peoples of Mexico. For reasons that are unclear, Poverty Point flourished for only about three centuries and then declined. Nevertheless, it foreshadowed later developments in the Mississippi Valley.

A different kind of mound-building culture, called Adena, emerged in the Ohio Valley in the fifth century B.C. Adena villages were smaller than Poverty Point, rarely exceeding four hundred inhabitants. But Adena people spread over a wide area and built hundreds of mounds, most of them containing graves. The largest, Grave Creek Mound in West Virginia, was 240 feet in diameter, 70 feet high, and contained 72,000 tons of soil. The treatment of Adena dead varied widely, indicating differences in social or political status. Some corpses were cremated, others were placed in round clay basins, and still others were given elaborate tombs. Some burials contained just a few utilitarian grave goods, whereas others had many more and varied goods including pipes and other finely crafted objects.

During the first century B.C., Adena culture evolved into a more complex and widespread culture known as Hopewell. Hopewell ceremonial centers were even larger and more elaborate than their Adena predecessors. They proliferated not only in the Ohio Valley but also in the Illinois River Valley. Some centers contained two or three dozen mounds within enclosures of several square miles. The variety and quantity of goods buried with members of the elite were also greater. Some Hopewell corpses were surrounded with thousands of freshwater pearls or copper ornaments or with sheets of mica, quartz, or other sacred substances. Hopewell artisans fashioned a wide variety of effigies,

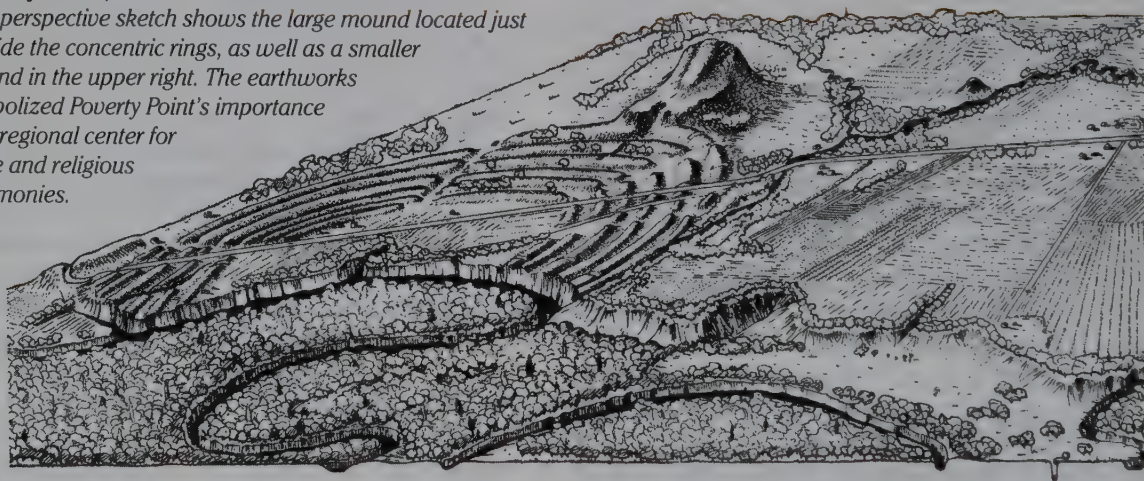


### Great Serpent Mound, Ohio

*This well-known mound, built for religious ceremonies rather than for burials, depicts a 1,254-foot-long snake devouring an egg or a frog.*

### Poverty Point, Louisiana

*This perspective sketch shows the large mound located just outside the concentric rings, as well as a smaller mound in the upper right. The earthworks symbolized Poverty Point's importance as a regional center for trade and religious ceremonies.*



ornaments, and jewelry, which their owners wore to their graves. The raw materials for these objects originated in locales throughout America east of the Rockies. Through far-flung trade networks Hopewell influence spread over much of the Eastern Woodlands—to communities as far away as Wisconsin, Missouri, Florida, and New York. Some of these, such as Marksville in Louisiana, emulated the Ohio centers in almost every detail, but others were more selective, imitating Hopewell mounds, copper work, or pottery. Al-

though the great Hopewell centers of the Ohio and Illinois valleys were abandoned in the fifth century A.D. for reasons that are unclear, they had an enormous influence on subsequent developments in eastern North America.

Remarkably, the people who created the sophisticated Hopewell culture were hunter-gatherers but not farmers. Archaic Indians in Kentucky and Missouri had cultivated small amounts of squash as early as 2500 B.C., and maize first appeared in eastern North

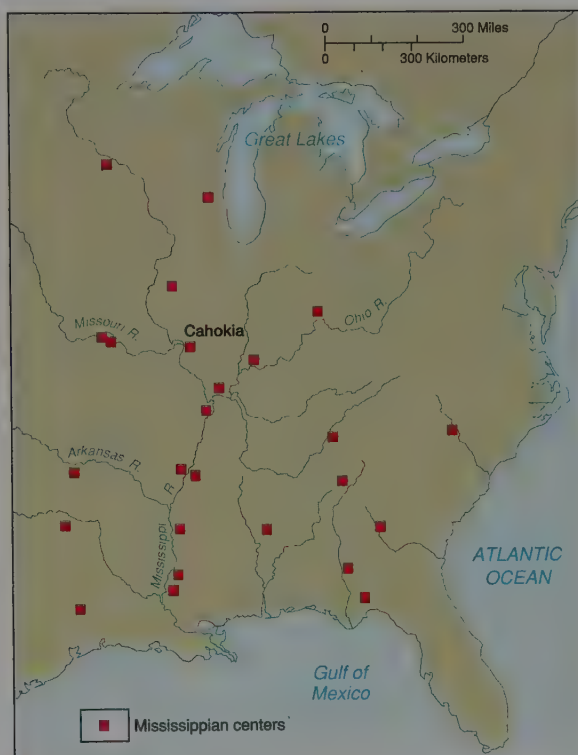


America by 300 B.C. But agriculture became a dietary mainstay for Woodlands people only between the seventh and twelfth centuries A.D., as women moved beyond gathering and minor cultivating activities to become the major producers of food.

The first full-time farmers in the East were Indians living on the floodplains of the Mississippi River and its major tributaries. They developed a new culture, called Mississippian, that incorporated elements of Hopewell culture and ideas from Mexico into their indigenous traditions. The volume of Mississippian craft production and long-distance trade dwarfed those of Adena and Hopewell cultures. At the same time, Mississippian towns, numbering hundreds or even thousands of people, were built around open plazas like those of central Mexico. Large platform mounds stood next to the plazas, topped by sumptuous religious temples and the residences of chiefs and other elites. Religious ceremonies focused on the worship of the sun as the source of agricultural fertility. The people considered chiefs to be related to the sun. When a chief died, his wives and servants were killed so that they could accompany him to the afterlife. Largely in connection with their religious and funeral rituals, Mississippian artists produced highly sophisticated work in clay, stone, shell, copper, wood, and other materials.

Many Mississippian centers were built not by local natives but by outsiders seeking to combine farming and riverborne trade (see map). Local natives often were coerced into bringing corn and goods to a new center and paying homage to its chief. By the tenth century most Mississippian centers were part of even larger systems, based on trade and on shared religious beliefs and dominated by a single "super-center." The most powerful such system centered around Cahokia (see *A Place in Time*), located near modern St. Louis.

For two and a half centuries, Cahokia reigned supreme in the American heartland. Beginning in the thirteenth century, however, Cahokia and its allied centers began to experience shortages of food and other resources. Soon they were challenged militarily by neighboring peoples and, as a result, the inhabitants, fled to the countryside. By the fifteenth century, Indians in the central Mississippi Valley were living (like their Archaic forebears) in small villages linked by reciprocity rather than coercion. Similar developments led to the decline of some temple-mound centers in the Southeast, but in this region new centers arose to take their place.



### Major Mississippian Centers

(Source: Jay A. Levenson, ed., *Art in the Age of Exploration: Circa 1492* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1991)).

In spite of Cahokia's decline, however, Mississippian culture profoundly affected Native Americans in the East. Mississippians spread new strains of maize and beans, along with many of the techniques and tools to cultivate these crops, enabling women to weave agriculture into the fabric of village life among the Iroquois and other Indians throughout the region. Only in portions of northern New England and the upper Great Lakes was the growing season generally too short for maize (which required 100 frost-free days) to be a reliable crop. Some eastern Indians, searching for new farmlands, moved to the river valleys of the plains, where they interacted peacefully with the region's hunting peoples.

Indian hands tended eastern North America's lands with skill and care. Over much of the region, great expanses of hardwood trees formed open, parklike tracts, free of underbrush (which Indians systematically burned) but rich with grass and berry bushes that at-

# A PLACE IN TIME

1200

## Cahokia in 1200

Between the tenth and thirteenth centuries, a city of about twenty thousand people flourished near the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. Called Cahokia, it filled more than six square miles and contained more than 120 earthworks. At its center a four-teraced structure called Monk's Mound covered fifteen acres (more than the Great Pyramids of Egypt) and rose 100 feet at its highest point. Surrounding the city, a 125-square-mile metropolitan area encompassed ten large towns and more than fifty farming villages. In addition, Cahokia dominated a vast network of commercial and political alliances

extending over much of the American heartland.

Cahokia's beginnings lay in the seventh century A.D., as Native Americans in the East were shifting to farming as their primary means of procuring food. In search of better soil, several small villages moved to the low floodplain extending eastward from the Mississippi around what is now the Illinois side of greater St. Louis. Around A.D. 900 these villages began their transformation into a city with the construction of several mounds. Within another two centuries, a stockade enclosed Monk's Mound and numerous other public structures, and most of the

city's residents lived outside the walled precincts.

Cahokia was ideally situated for a position of preeminence in mid-America. Its fertile land yielded surplus agricultural crops, which the women harvested, and the river provided rich supplies of fish and mussels. Game and wild plants abounded in nearby uplands. The city had ready access not only to the Mississippi and Missouri rivers but to the Ohio and Illinois, where Adena and Hopewell peoples had previously developed extensive trade networks based on shared religious beliefs. Cahokia and other Mississippian societies drew on Hopewell be-

### Cahokia Mounds

*This contemporary painting conveys Cahokia's grand scale. Not until the late eighteenth century did another North American city (Philadelphia) surpass the population of Cahokia, c. 1200.*







liefs and new ideas from Mexico as they erected even more complex political, economic, and religious institutions. By the twelfth century, some scholars believe, Cahokia was the capital of a potential nation-state.

Archaeology provides evidence of what Cahokians made and left in the ground as well as clues to their social structure, trade networks, and beliefs. Work gangs dug the soil for the mounds with shovels made of wood and stone and then carried the dirt in baskets to construction sites, often more than half a mile away. Much of the workforce for this backbreaking labor undoubtedly was drawn from neighboring towns, which also contributed agricultural surpluses to feed specialized artisans and elites in the city. The artisans produced pottery, shell beads, copper ornaments, clothing, stone tools, and a range of other goods. The raw materials for these objects were brought to Cahokia from locations all over eastern and central North America as tribute—payment

by Indian societies dependent on Cahokia—or in return for the finished products. The coordination of labor, trade, and other activities also required a sizable class of managers or overseers. Atop all these were the political and religious leaders, whose overpowering roles are confirmed by French accounts, recorded in the eighteenth century, of a similar society among the Natchez Indians of the lower Mississippi River.

Archaeologists also find evidence of social ranking at Cahokia in the treatment of the dead. Most people were buried in mass graves outside the city, but more prestigious commoners were placed in ridgetop mounds, and those of highest status in conical mounds. In the single most remarkable mound, an adult male was laid out on a platform of twenty thousand beads, made from shells originating in the Gulf of Mexico. He was surrounded by bushels of mica from the Appalachians, a sheet of rolled copper from Lake Superior, and quivers of arrows from communities throughout the Mississippi Valley. This extraordinary man did not go to his grave alone. An adjacent pit contained the bodies of fifty young females in their late teens and early twenties; another held the remains of four men whose heads and hands were cut off; and a third included three men and three women. French witnesses describe how, when a Natchez ruler died, his wife, servants, guards, and others personally attached to him were killed so that they could accompany him in the afterlife. The people called this ruler the Great Sun to denote his position as earthly representative of the sun, the central focus of Mississippian religion. This and burials like it at Cahokia appear to be based on similar beliefs.

By 1200 Cahokia had reached its peak. During the century that followed, it declined in size and power, while other centers in the Southeast and Midwest surpassed it. Although the causes of this decline are not certain, the archaeological evidence provides clues. First, neighboring communities were straining to produce enough crops to feed themselves and the many Ca-



### Stone Spud

*A spud was used in ceremonies as a symbol of authority.*

hokians who did not grow their own food. Second, the city's demands for fuel and construction materials were seriously reducing the supply of wood in and around Cahokia. This depletion of the forests also deprived residents of the animals and wild plants on which they depended for food. Third, the strengthening of the stockade surrounding central Cahokia suggests that the elites were facing a military challenge from inside or outside the city, or both. Finally, the trade networks that formerly brought tribute to Cahokia and carried away the city's finished products had collapsed. Taken together, these trends indicate that a combination of environmental factors and resistance to centralized authority probably led to Cahokia's downfall. By the time the French explorer La Salle passed through in 1682, Cahokia was a small village of Illinois Indians who, like other native peoples of the region, had abandoned Mississippian religious and political systems for the autonomous villages of their ancestors.



**Sandstone Tablet Depicting Birdman**

**Guale Indians Planting Crops, 1564**

*A French explorer sketched this scene on the Carolina coast in which men are breaking up the soil while women sow corn, bean, and squash seeds.*

tracted a profusion of game. The Woodland peoples' "slash-and-burn" method of land management was environmentally sound and economically productive. Men cleared the land by burning underbrush and destroying the larger trees' bark. Then, amid the leafless deadwood, women planted corn, beans, and pumpkins in soil enriched by ash. After several years of abundant harvests, yields declined, and the Indians moved on to a new site to repeat the process. Soon ground-cover reclaimed the abandoned clearing, restoring fertility naturally, and the Indians could return. Meanwhile, Native Americans engaged in diverse food-producing activities (fishing, hunting, and gathering wild plants, as well as farming) to avoid dependence on a single food source.

By A.D. 1500 the North American continent presented a remarkable variety of human cultures, societies, and historical experiences. As they had for thousands of years, small, mobile hunting bands peopled the Arctic, Subarctic, Great Basin, and much of the Plains. More sedentary societies, based on fishing or gathering, predominated along the Pacific coast, whereas village-based agriculture was typical in the Eastern Woodlands and the river valleys of the Southwest and Plains. Finally, Mississippian urban centers still prevailed in portions of the Southeast.

Despite the vast differences among Native Americans, much bound them together. Trade facilitated the exchange not only of goods but of ideas, techniques, and beliefs. Thus the bow and arrow, ceramic pottery, and certain beliefs and rituals surrounding the burial of the dead came to characterize Indians everywhere. Indians also shared a preference for the independent, kin-based communities that generally had characterized indigenous North America, a preference that probably was reinforced by the failure of such highly centralized systems as Cahokia and the Anasazi centers during the thirteenth century.

## **American Peoples on the Eve of European Contact**

In 1492 the entire Western Hemisphere had a population of about 75 million. Native Americans clustered most thickly in Mexico and Central America, the Caribbean islands, and Peru. But North America was not an empty wasteland. Between 7 million and 10 million Indians lived north of present-day Mexico, unevenly distributed. Sparse populations of nomads inhabited the Great Basin, the high plains, and the



northern forests. Fairly dense concentrations, however, thrived along the Pacific coast, in the Southwest and Southeast, in the Mississippi Valley, and along the Atlantic coast. All these peoples grouped themselves in several hundred nations and tribes, speaking many diverse languages and dialects. But the most important Indian social groups were the family, the village, and—in many societies—the clan. Within these spheres Native Americans fed themselves, reared their children, and interacted with one another and with the spiritual forces surrounding them.

### *Family and Community*

Kinship cemented all Indian societies together. Ties to cousins, aunts, and uncles created complex patterns of social obligation. So did membership in clans—the large networks of kin groups that reckoned their descent from a common ancestor who embodied the admired qualities of a particular animal. Depending on the culture, clan membership could descend from either the mother or the father. Clans linked widely scattered groups within a tribe. Members of different clans usually dwelled together in a single village.

Kinship bonds counted for much more in Indian societies than did the nuclear families that married couples and their children formed. Indians did not necessarily expect spouses to be bound together forever, but kinship lasted for life. Thus Native Americans could accept the divorce of a married couple without feeling a threat to the social order. Customs regulating marriages varied considerably, but strict rules always prevailed. In most cultures young people married in their teens, after winning social acceptance as adults and (generally) after a period of sexual experimentation. Sometimes male leaders took more than one wife, but nuclear families never stood alone. Instead, strong ties of residence and deference bound each couple to one or both sets of parents, producing what social scientists call extended families.

Kinship was also the basis for armed conflict. Indian societies typically considered homicide a matter to be resolved by the extended families of the victim and the perpetrator. If the perpetrator's family offered a gift that the victim's family considered appropriate, the question was settled. If not, the victim's kin might seek to avenge the killing by armed retaliation. If necessary, chiefs and other leaders intervened to resolve disputes between families within the same band, village, or

tribe. But disputes between members of different groups could escalate into war. Densely populated societies that competed for scarce resources, as on the Northwest and California coasts, and centralized societies that attempted to dominate trade networks through coercion, such as Hopewell and Mississippian, experienced frequent and intense intergroup warfare. Still, warfare remained a low-level affair in most of North America. An exasperated New England officer, writing of his effort to obtain Indian allies in the early seventeenth century, described a battle between two Indian groups as “more for pastime than to conquer and subdue enemies.” He concluded that “they might fight seven years and not kill seven men.”

Women did the cultivating among most agricultural Indians outside the Southwest. For Indian women, field work easily meshed with child care, as did such other tasks as preparing animal hides and gathering wild vegetation. Men did jobs that took them away from the women and children: hunting, fishing, trading, negotiating, and fighting. With women producing the greater share of the food supply, these communities accorded women more power than did European societies. Among the Iroquois of upstate New York, for example, the women collectively owned the fields and distributed food, and leading women played a weighty role in deliberations regarding war. In New England, women sometimes served as *sachems*, or chiefs.

In the Southwest, wresting a living from the severe environment demanded concentrated effort, but the native peoples succeeded remarkably well. The population was comparatively dense: a hundred thousand people may have lived in the pueblos in the early sixteenth century, and intensive cultivation also supported large river-valley settlements. As in the rest of North America, extended families formed the foundation of southwestern village life in both the pueblos and the river valleys.

Southwestern patterns of property ownership and gender roles differed from those of Native Americans elsewhere. Unlike Indians in other regions, here men and women shared agricultural labor. Some peoples owned land privately and passed it through the male line, and men dominated decision making. In pueblo society (which in this respect resembled societies in the Northeast and Southeast), land was communally owned, and women played an influential role in community affairs. A pueblo woman could end a marriage simply by tossing her husband's belongings out the

door and sending him back to his kinfolk. Moreover, clan membership passed through the mother's line. Yet pueblo communities depended on secret male societies to perform the rituals that would secure the gods' blessing and ensure life-giving rain. More than other Indians, pueblo society strictly subordinated the individual to the group and demanded rigorous cooperation.

### *Indian Spiritual and Social Values*

Most Indians explained the origin and destiny of the human race in myths told by storytellers during religious ceremonies. In the beginning, said the Iroquois, was the sky world of unchanging perfection. From it fell a beautiful pregnant woman, whom the birds saved from plunging into the limitless ocean. On the back of a tortoise that rose from the sea, birds created the earth's soil, in which the woman planted seeds carried during her fall. From these seeds sprang all nature; from her womb, the human race.

Native American religions revolved around the conviction that all nature was alive, pulsating with a spiritual power—*manitou*, in the Algonquian languages, *orenda* in the Iroquoian, *wakan* in the Siouan. A mysterious, awe-inspiring force that could affect human life for both good and evil, such power united all nature in an unbroken web. Manitou encompassed “every thing which they cannot comprehend,” reported the Puritan leader Roger Williams, one of the few Europeans who genuinely tried to understand the northeastern Indians' spiritual world. Their belief in supernatural power led most Native Americans to seek constantly to conciliate all the spiritual forces in nature: living things, rocks and water, sun and moon, even ghosts and witches. For example, Indians were careful to pray to the spirits of the animals they hunted, thanking them for the gift of food.

Indians had many ways of gaining access to spiritual power. One was through dreaming: most Native Americans took very seriously the visions that came to them in sleep. Some also sought access to the supernatural through difficult physical ordeals. Young men in many societies gained recognition as adults through a “vision quest”—a solitary venture into a forest or up a mountain, involving fasting and awaiting the appearance of an animal spirit that would reveal itself as a protective guide and offer a glimpse of the future. Girls went through comparable rituals at the onset of menstruation to initiate them into the spiritual world from

which female reproductive power flowed. Moreover, entire communities often practiced collective power-seeking rituals such as the Sun Dance, performed by Indians of the Plains and Great Basin (see Chapter 17).

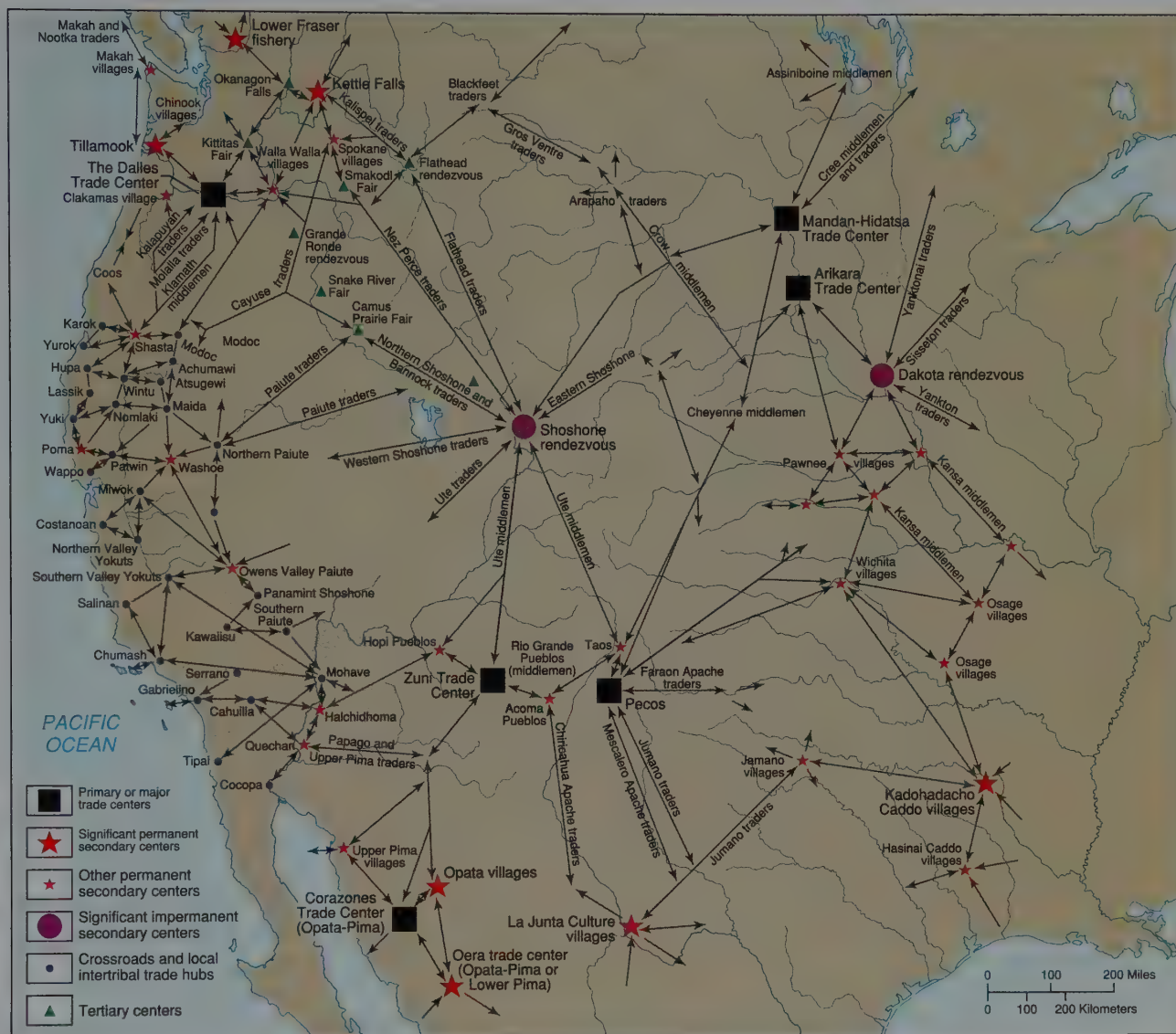
Although on occasion all Indians tried to communicate directly with the spiritual world, they normally relied on shamans for help in understanding the unseen. The shamans were healers who used both medicinal plants and magical chants. They also interpreted dreams, guided vision quests, invoked war or peace spirits, and figured prominently in community councils. Chiefs had to maintain respectful relations with shamans, who by the sixteenth century were organized into priesthoods in some societies.

Even as they grew larger and more complex, Indian societies maintained the strong sense of interdependence forged over thousands of years by Paleo-Indians and their successors. As a result, they demanded a strong degree of cooperation. From early childhood Indians learned to be accommodating and reserved—slow to reveal their own feelings before they could sense others'. Although few Native American peoples favored physical punishment in child rearing, Indian parents punished psychologically, by shaming. Communities made decisions by consensus, and leaders articulated slowly emerging agreements in memorable, persuasive, often passionate oratory. Shamans and chiefs therefore had to be dramatic orators. Noted John Smith, they spoke in public “with vehemency and so great passions that they sweat till they drop and are so out of breath they scarce can speak.”

Because Indians highly valued consensus building in everyday life, their leaders' authority depended primarily on the respect that they invoked rather than what they could demand by compulsion. Distributing gifts was central to establishing and maintaining leadership within a Native American community, as a French observer in early-seventeenth-century Canada clearly understood: “For the savages have that noble quality, that they give liberally, casting at the feet of him whom they will honor the present that they give him. But it is with hope to receive some reciprocal kindness, which is a kind of contract, which we call . . . ‘I give thee, to the end thou shouldst give me.’ ”

Thus for Indians, trade was not merely an economic activity by which they acquired useful goods. It was also a means of ensuring goodwill with other peoples and of building their own prestige. European visitors almost always found Native Americans eager to barter. For many centuries, trade among the Indians





### Native American Trade Networks

Well before the arrival of Europeans, North American Indians participated in extensive trade relations not only locally but over vast distances.

had spanned the continent. The Hurons of southern Ontario and the Pueblo Indians of the Southwest produced large agricultural surpluses for trade, and southwestern turquoise found its way to Mexico and the Great Plains. Flint and other tool-making materials, salt, dyes, furs, exotic minerals and shells, and (in hard times) food and seeds were major objects of trade. So was tobacco, which Indians regarded primarily as a

ceremonial drug, its fragrant smoke symbolizing the union of heaven and earth.

Scholars have used the word *reciprocity* to characterize Native American religious and social values. Reciprocity involved mutual give-and-take, but its aim was not to confer equality. Instead, societies based on reciprocity tried to maintain equilibrium and interdependence between individuals of unequal power and pres-

tige. In their religious thinking, too, Indians applied the concept of reciprocity, in viewing nature as a web of interdependent spiritual powers into which humans had to fit. And in social organization, the Indians' principle of reciprocity required that communities be places of face-to-face, lifelong interaction. Trade and gift giving solidified such reciprocal bonds. The Indians' faith in social reciprocity also underlay their idea of property rights. They believed that the people of one area might agree to share with others the right to use the land for different but complementary purposes: hunting, gathering, farming, trapping, or traveling.

But Native American society was hardly a noncompetitive world.

Even in the Southwest, where stress on cooperation minimized competition, Indian life had an intensely competitive side. Individuals and communities eagerly strove to show physical prowess in ritualized games like lacrosse, and some bet enthusiastically on the outcome. "They are so bewitched with these . . . games, that they will lose sometimes all they have," said an Englishman of the Massachusetts Indians about 1630. Such games served not only as recreation but also as a means of acquiring prestige.

All Indian cultures possessed a strong sense of order. Custom, the demands of social conformity, and the rigors of nature strictly regulated life, and the people's everyday affairs mingled with the spiritual world at every turn. Nature and the supernatural world could sometimes be frightening. For example, Indians feared ghosts and believed that nonconformists could invoke evil spirits by witchcraft—the most dreaded crime in Indian cultures.

It follows that the breakdown of order in Indian communities could bring fearful consequences: accusations of witchcraft, demands for revenge against wrongdoers, war against enemies. Going to war or exacting personal revenge was a ritualized way of restoring order that had broken down. A captured male could expect death after prolonged torture. Indian men learned from early childhood to inflict (and to bear) physical pain out of loyalty to kin and neighbors; they knew that they must withstand torture without flinching and death without fear. Endurance was central to Indian life.

## CONCLUSION

When Europeans "discovered" America in 1492, they did not, as they thought, enter a static world of simple

savages. Instead, for thousands of years, native cultures and societies had transformed the North American continent into a human habitat. Indians had tapped the secrets of the land and the environment so as to be able to sustain themselves and flourish in almost every ecological zone. Over the millennia they learned the properties, uses, and values of plants, animals, soils, rocks, and other minerals, as well as the cycles of months, seasons, and years. And Native Americans transformed the landscape, as evidenced by their hunting camps, villages, and cornfields and by the web of roads and trails connecting them to one another. But for Indians, these discoveries and accomplishments were not the basis for pride in their ability to conquer nature. Rather, they saw themselves as participants in a natural and spiritual order that pervaded the universe, and their attitudes, as expressed in their religious practices, were ones of gratitude and constant concern lest they violate that order.

These beliefs did not necessarily make all Indians careful conservationists. Plains hunters, stampeding herds of bison (an essential food source) over cliffs, often killed more animals than they could eat. And eastern Indians may sometimes have lost control of their fires and burned more land than intended. But the depletion of species in such cases was only temporary; Indians did not act consistently enough to prevent their renewal. However, other Indian actions were more consistent and hence more consequential. One reason for the decline of the great Anasazi centers in the Southwest and of the Mississippian center of Cahokia was the excessive demands placed on their environments by large concentrations of people. In these instances, Indians seemed to have learned the obvious lessons and abandoned destructive ways of life.

After 1500 a new attitude toward the land made itself felt in North America. "A people come from under the world, to take their world from them"—thus an early-seventeenth-century Virginia Indian characterized the English invaders of his homeland. Certain that God had given humanity dominion over nature, Europeans claimed vast expanses of territory for their crowned heads. They then divided much of the land into plots, each to be owned by an individual or family and to be valued according to the wealth it produced. All the while they ignored and even belittled strategies that would have allowed natural resources to renew themselves. The modern society that since the seventeenth century has arisen on the Indians' ancient continent bears little resemblance to the world that the Native Americans once knew.



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**— FOR FURTHER READING —**

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John Bierhorst, *The Mythology of North America* (1985). An excellent introduction to Native American mythology, organized regionally.

Brian Fagan, *Ancient North America: The Archaeology of a Continent* (1991). An informative, comprehensive introduction to the continent's history before the Europeans' arrival.

Gwyn Jones, *The Norse Atlantic Saga*, rev. ed. (1986). A single volume combining recent scholarship on Norse, Eskimos, and Indians with translations of their most important sagas.

Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., *America in 1492: The World of the Indian Peoples Before the Arrival of Columbus* (1992). Regional and thematic essays on life in the Western Hemisphere on the eve of European contact.

William C. Sturtevant, gen. ed., *Handbook of North American Indians* (20 vols. projected, 1978– ). A partially completed reference work providing basic information on the history and culture of virtually every known native society, as well as surveys of regional archaeology and essays on topics of special interest.

Bruce G. Trigger and Wilcomb E. Washburn, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Native Peoples of the Americas*, vol. I (in two parts): North America (1996). A collection of authoritative essays by archaeologists and historians, covering the entire expanse of Native American history.

# 2

## Transatlantic Encounters and Colonial Beginnings 1492–1630



Bartholomew Gosnold Trading with Wampanoag Indians at Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, by Theodore De Bry, 1634





At ten o'clock on a moonlit night, the tense crew spotted a glimmering light. Then at two the next morning came the shout "Land! Land!" At daybreak they entered a shallow lagoon. The captain, Christopher Columbus, rowed ashore, the royal flag fluttering in the breeze. "And, all having rendered thanks to the Lord, kneeling on the ground, embracing it with tears of joy for the immeasurable mercy of having reached it, [he] rose and gave this island the name San Salvador." The date was October 12, 1492. The place was a tiny tropical island less than four hundred miles southeast of present-day Florida.

Besides his crew, the only witnesses to Columbus's landing were a band of Taíno Indians peering from the jungle as he claimed for the Spanish queen the island that they called Guanahaní. Soon curiosity overcame their fears. Gesturing and smiling, the Taínos walked down to the beach, where the newcomers quickly noticed the cigars they offered and the gold pendants in their noses.

The voyagers learned to savor the islanders' tobacco and to trade for golden ornaments as they sailed on among the West Indies, searching for the emperor of China's capital city. Although Columbus had found no potentates, he sensed that fabulous wealth lay within his grasp. He was sure that he had reached Asia—the Indies. Two months later, bringing with him some "Indians" and various souvenirs, he sailed home to tell of "a land to be desired and, once seen, never to be left."

Perhaps some Taínos would have agreed with the astonished Canadian Indian who saw his first shaggily bearded white man in 1632: "O, what an ugly man! Is it possible that any woman would look with favor on such a man?" Later Indians' accounts of their first sightings of Europeans also speak of wonder at seeing white-sailed "canoes" descending as from the sky and

of fascination with the strangers' "magic"—their guns, gunpowder, durable metal pots and tools, and glass beads. Because the strangers were seldom prepared to survive unaided, the hospitable native people had ample opportunity to make themselves useful.

But the potential for deep misunderstanding was already present. From his first day in the New World, Columbus thought like a benevolent colonial master. "They should be good servants and of quick intelligence, . . . and I believe that they would easily be made Christians, for it appeared to me that they had no creed." The Europeans would soon realize that Native Americans were neither gullible fools nor humble servants. Disillusioned, the newcomers would begin to see the Indians as lazy and deceitful "savages." Meanwhile, the Native Americans found much of the Europeans' "magic"—which included their diseases as well as their material goods—very destructive. In much of what is now Latin America, the coming of the Europeans quickly turned into conquest. In the future United States and Canada, European mastery would come more slowly. More than one hundred years would pass before truly self-sustaining colonies were established. Nevertheless, from the moment of Columbus's landing on October 12, 1492, the American continents became the stage for the encounter of Native American, European, and African peoples.

This chapter will focus on four major questions:

- ◆ How did trade and warfare affect West African and western European societies in the sixteenth century?
- ◆ Which developments *within* Europe were most critical in facilitating expansion to the Americas?
- ◆ Why were other European powers unable to match Spain's imperial successes in the early

sixteenth century, and why were some of Spain's rivals able to compete effectively by the early seventeenth century?

- ♦ Why did Native Americans sometimes welcome, and other times resist, European traders and colonizers?

## African and European Peoples

Although separated by the vast Sahara Desert, West Africa and Europe were linked indirectly by trade long before coming into direct contact in the fifteenth century. Thereafter the two continents spawned the largest movement of peoples until then in world history, from the Eastern Hemisphere to the Western. But whereas most Europeans migrated with some degree of freedom, most Africans crossed the Atlantic in chains.

### *Mediterranean Crossroads*

One of the most vibrant and tumultuous areas in the Eastern Hemisphere was the Mediterranean Sea, around which African, Asian, and European peoples had interacted in both peace and war since ancient times. By 1400 hundreds of small ships criss-crossed the sea annually between port cities, unloading luxury goods from one part of the world and loading others for the next leg of their journeys. Thus it was that West African gold enriched Turkish sultans, European guns strengthened North African armies, and Indian spices stimulated Italian palates. In Africa and Asia, many of these goods moved to and from the Mediterranean by caravans that traveled thousands of miles across forbidding deserts like the Sahara and rugged mountains such as the Himalayas. Seagoing merchant vessels linked east and south Asia with the Arabian peninsula and East Africa, and others connected northern and southern Europe. But before the fifteenth century, intercontinental travel and trade were unknown on the Atlantic.

Mediterranean commerce was closely intertwined with religion and politics. From the seventh to the fourteenth centuries, Muslim conquerors spread Islam from Southeast Asia to West Africa and much of southern Europe. During the same period, Roman Catholic rulers introduced Christianity to new areas of central and northern Europe. Political leaders sought to capture some of the wealth being generated by commerce while merchants valued the security afforded by close

ties with strong rulers. Above all the two religions provided a common faith and identity to peoples spread over vast distances, reinforcing the political and economic links being forged between them.

Religion did not always divide people along political or economic lines. Christian and Muslim rulers on the Mediterranean frequently signed treaties with one another in order to secure commercial ties and protect against piracy. Christians, Jews, and Muslims, especially merchants, frequently traveled and lived in lands where they were in the minority. In the fourteenth century, Morocco in particular was a stable, pluralistic society that welcomed and tolerated Jews, many of them fleeing persecution in Christian portions of Spain, as well as Christians.

But over time, religious strife between Christians and Muslims became more common. Beginning in the eleventh century, European Christians undertook a long series of crusades to recapture formerly Christian territories in Europe and the Middle East from Muslim “infidels,” and some Muslim leaders waged *jihad* (holy war) against Christians. In southwestern Europe, the kingdoms of Castile and Aragon led a gradual “reconquest” of the Iberian peninsula to rid it of non-Christians. That effort culminated in 1492 when the last Muslim rulers were driven from Spain and all remaining Jews were forced by decree to convert to Catholicism. Meanwhile, Spain's small neighbor, Portugal, had launched a series of increasingly bold voyages southward in the Atlantic, seizing Moroccan ports and taking over the trade in gold and other commodities between Europe and West Africa.

### *West Africa and Its Peoples*

Before the advent of long-distance travel on the Atlantic, the only link between sub-Saharan Africa and the Mediterranean was the broad belt of grassland known as the Sudan (from which the modern African nation gets its name) that separates the desert from the



**Christopher Columbus**

*Although he thought he was in Asia, Columbus's landfall inaugurated European expansion to the Americas.*



## CHRONOLOGY

- c. 1000** Muslim conquest of Ghana.  
Norse establish a small settlement at Vinland (Newfoundland).
- c. 1300** Rise of Mali.
- c. 1400–1600** Renaissance era—first in Italy, then elsewhere in Europe.
- c. 1400** Rise of Songhai.  
Rise of Guinea.
- 1440** Portuguese slave trade in West Africa begins.
- 1488** Bartolomeu Dias reaches the Cape of Good Hope.
- 1492** Christian “reconquest” of Spain.  
Christopher Columbus lands at San Salvador.
- 1497** John Cabot reaches Nova Scotia and Newfoundland.
- 1512–1521** Juan Ponce de León explores Florida.
- 1513** Vasco Núñez de Balboa views the Pacific Ocean.
- 1517** Protestant Reformation begins in Germany.
- 1519** Ferdinand Magellan embarks on round-the-world voyage.  
Hernán Cortés begins conquest of Aztec empire.
- 1524** Giovanni da Verrazano explores the Atlantic coast of North America.
- 1534** Church of England breaks from Roman Catholic Church.
- 1534–1542** Jacques Cartier explores eastern Canada for France.
- 1539–1543** Hernando de Soto explores the southeastern United States.
- 1540–1542** Francisco Vázquez de Coronado explores the southwestern United States.
- 1558** Elizabeth I becomes queen of England.
- 1565** St. Augustine founded by Spanish.
- 1565–1580s** English attempt to subdue Ireland.
- 1577** Francis Drake circumnavigates the globe.
- 1584–1587** Roanoke colony explored and founded.
- 1588** English defeat the Spanish Armada.
- 1598** New Mexico colony founded.
- 1603** James I becomes king of England.
- 1607** English found colonies at Jamestown and Sagadahoc.
- 1608** Samuel de Champlain founds Quebec.
- 1609** Henry Hudson explores the Hudson River for the Dutch Republic.
- 1610–1614** First Anglo-Powhatan War.
- 1614** New Netherland colony founded.
- 1619** Large exports of tobacco from Virginia begin.  
First Africans arrive in Virginia.
- 1620** Mayflower Compact signed; Plymouth Plantation founded.
- 1622–1632** Second Anglo-Powhatan War.
- 1624** James I revokes Virginia Company’s charter.

forests to the south. Here the growth of the trans-Saharan caravan trade stimulated the rise of kingdoms and empires whose size and wealth rivaled any in Europe at the time. The richest portion of the savanna was in West Africa, with its ample stores of gold (see map on page 22). In the eleventh century, Muslim conquerors toppled the empire of Ghana in order to supply a growing European demand for gold. Although Ghana soon overthrew the invaders, its rulers retained Islam and the lucrative contacts with wealthy rulers and merchants in North Africa and the Middle East that the Muslim network provided.

In the fourteenth century, Ghana collapsed and a new empire, Mali, arose in its place. Mali expanded westward into the Senegal and Gambia river valleys,

leading to the Atlantic, and southward to the mighty Niger River. Every market town in Mali was staffed with royal agents who facilitated trade, collected duties, and protected merchants against robbery. Traders objecting to high duties imposed by agents could appeal directly to the emperor. Mali’s attentiveness to commercial conditions, along with its geographic expanse, brought it great wealth as well as fame in the outside world. Although its principal import was salt from the Sahara, it also imported brass, copper, cloth, spices, manufactured goods, and Arabian horses. Its best known city, Timbuktu, was widely recognized for its intellectual and academic vitality and for its beautiful mosque, designed and built by a Spanish Muslim architect.



### Europe, Africa, and Southwestern Asia in 1492

In 1492 Europeans had little knowledge of the outside world apart from the Mediterranean basin and Africa's west coast. Since the Azores, the Canary Islands, and the Cape Verde Islands had been explored recently in the eastern Atlantic, many Europeans were not surprised when Columbus encountered new islands farther west in 1492.



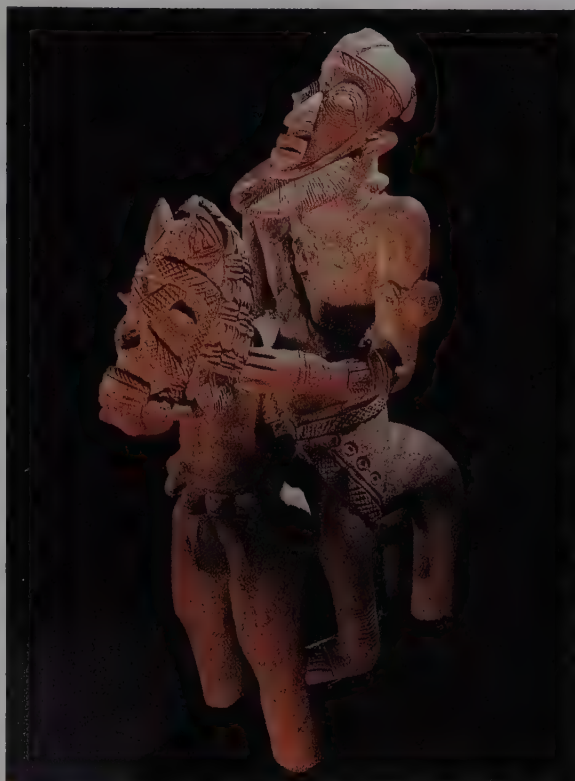
Early in the fifteenth century, divisions within Mali's royal family severely weakened the empire, leading many territories to secede. A successor empire, Songhai, arose briefly and forcibly united most of the seceded territory. But by the sixteenth century, most of Mali and Songhai had both been absorbed by Morocco to the north.

Compared with the Sudan and its mighty empires, coastal West Africa remained relatively undeveloped for many centuries. In Senegambia at Africa's westernmost bulge, several small Islamic states took root. Infestation by the tsetse fly, the carrier of sleeping sickness, kept livestock-herding peoples out of Guinea's coastal forests, but many small states arose here, too. Among these was Benin, where artisans had been fashioning magnificent metalwork for centuries.

In the fifteenth century, Guinea's population rose. With gold having recently been made the standard for nearly all Europe's currencies, demand for the precious metal was greater than ever. During the fifteenth century, this demand brought thousands of newcomers from the Sudan and Central Africa to the region later known as Africa's "Gold Coast." New states emerged to take advantage of the opportunities afforded by exporting gold, though none was as extensive or powerful as Mali at its height. Similarly eager to capitalize on its neighbor's resources were the Portuguese, who in the mid-fifteenth century used new maritime techniques to sail up and down West Africa's coast in search of gold and slaves (see below).

West African political leaders differed sharply in the amounts and kinds of political power they wielded. Some emperors enjoyed semigodlike status, which they only thinly disguised if they adopted Islam. Rulers of smaller kingdoms depended largely on their ability to persuade, to conform to custom, and sometimes to redistribute wealth justly among their people.

In sub-Saharan Africa, the cohesiveness of kinship groups knitted society together. From childhood, Africans found themselves in a network of interlocking mutual obligations to kinfolk. Not just parents but also aunts, uncles, distant cousins, and persons sharing clan ties formed an African's kin group and claimed his or her first loyalty. Africans held their grandparents in highest esteem and accorded village or clan elders great deference. In centuries to come, the tradition of strong extended families would help enslaved Africans in the New World to endure the breakup of nuclear families by sale.



**Mali Horseman, c. 13th–14th century**

*This terra-cotta figure originated in Mali, one of several powerful empires in West Africa before the arrival of Europeans.*

West Africans viewed marriage as a means by which extended families forged alliances for their mutual benefit. A prospective husband made a payment to his bride's kin before marriage. In so doing, he did not "buy" a wife; in effect, he posted bond for good behavior and acknowledged the relative prestige of his own and his bride's kin groups. A man of wealth and elite status could further strengthen his family's standing by marrying more than one woman. West African wives generally kept lifelong links with their own kin groups, and in many societies children traced descent through the mother's, not the father's, bloodline. All this buttressed women's standing.

Kinship also informed attitudes toward land and property. To West Africans, kin groups not only enjoyed inalienable rights to the soil that their ancestors had always cultivated but also had a duty to honor ancestors and earth spirits by properly cultivating the land. Like Native Americans, Africans did not treat land as a commodity to be bought and sold.

Cultivation was difficult in Africa and required the labor of both men and women. As in all tropical regions, scorching sunlight and frequent downpours prevented humus (slowly decaying vegetative matter) from accumulating in the African soil. Like Indians in eastern North America, Africans maintained soil fertility by practicing slash-and-burn tillage. In the coastal rain forests, Africans grew root crops, primarily yams. On the grasslands the staff of life was grain—millet, sorghum, and rice—though farming was supplemented by cattle-raising and fishing.

By the fifteenth century, the market economy fostered by long-distance trade extended to many small families. Farmers traded surplus crops at local marketplaces for other food or cloth. Artisans wove cloth, made clothing, and crafted tools and other objects of iron and wood. While gold was the preferred currency among wealthy rulers and merchants, cowrie shells served as a medium of exchange for most people.

Religion permeated African life. West African, like Native American, religions recognized spiritual presences pervading nature. The power of earth spirits and of agricultural ancestors reinforced the esteem that Africans accorded to cultivators. In the eighteenth century, Europeans got an authentic glimpse of African religion from Olaudah Equiano, a West African who had managed to buy his freedom from slavery:

The natives believe that there is one Creator of all things, and that he lives in the sun, [and] . . . that he governs events. . . . Some . . . believe in the transmigration of souls [reincarnation] to some degree. Those spirits, who are not transmigrated, such as their dear friends or relations, they believe always attend them, and guard them from the bad spirits of their foes. For this reason, they always, before eating . . . put some small portion of the meat and pour some of their drink, on the ground for them; and they often make oblations [offerings] of the blood of beasts or fowls at their graves.

Magic and the placating of spiritual powers were important in West African life, and, as with Native Americans, the responsibility for maintaining contact with the spirit world fell to shamans. Africans explained misfortunes in terms of witchcraft, much as did Native Americans and Europeans. But African religion differed from other traditions in its focus on ancestor worship, in which departed forebears were venerated as spiritual guardians.

Africa's magnificent artistic traditions were also steeped in religion. The ivory, cast iron, and wood sculpture of West Africa, whose bold designs would help mold the twentieth-century Western world's modern art, was used in ceremonies reenacting creation myths and honoring spirits. A strong moralistic streak ran through African folk tales. Oral reciters transmitted these stories in dramatic public presentations with ritual masks, dance, and music of a highly complex rhythmic structure now appreciated as one of the foundations of jazz.

Much in traditional African culture seemed to clash with the great monotheistic religions, Islam and Christianity. Among Africans, Islam appealed primarily to merchants trading with Muslim North Africa and the Middle East and to kings and emperors eager to consolidate their power. Some Muslim rulers, however, tempered Islam as a concession to popular opinion. By the sixteenth century, Islam had only begun to affect the daily lives of some cultivators and artisans in the Sudan. Christianity, arriving in West Africa with the Portuguese in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, demanded that Africans break even more radically with their traditional culture but, until the nineteenth century, had limited impact.

### *European Culture and Society*

When Columbus landed on San Salvador in 1492, Europe was approaching the height of a mighty cultural revival, the Renaissance. Contemporary intellectuals and poets believed that their age was witnessing a return to the standards of ancient Greek and Roman civilization. After a century-long economic recession, money had accumulated to pay for magnificent architecture, and wealthy patrons commissioned master painters and sculptors to create works glowing with idealized human beauty. Renaissance scholars strove to reconcile ancient philosophy with Christian faith, to explore the mysteries of nature, to map the world, and to explain the motions of the heavens.

But European society was quivering with tension. The era's artistic and intellectual creativity was partly inspired by intense social and spiritual stress, as Renaissance Europeans groped for stability by glorifying order, hierarchy, and beauty. A concern for power and rank ("degree") dominated European life between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries. William Shakespeare (1564–1616), who expressed Renaissance values with incomparable eloquence, wrote,



The heavens themselves, the planets and this  
center [earth]  
Observe degree, priority, and place . . .  
Take but degree away, untune that string,  
And hark, what discord follows!

Gender, wealth, inherited position, and political power affected every European's status, and few lived outside the reach of some political authority's burden of taxes and laws. But this order was shaky. Conflicts between states, between religions, and between social classes constantly threatened the balance.

At the heart of these conflicts lay deep-seated forces of economic, political, and religious change. Several western European political rulers, traditionally dependent on the nobility (or aristocracy) of their countries for financial support, sought to balance that dependence by turning to bankers and overseas merchants, whose ambitions for expansion matched the rulers' own. In this way, monarchs hoped to distance themselves from the inward-looking nobles, who preferred to pour their inherited fortunes into lavish living rather than embrace the forces of change sweeping the continent. Moreover, the rise of merchants and a market economy in western Europe was elevating the importance of the town, where business was conducted, instead of the countryside, which was dominated by the nobility and was home to most of Europe's population.

Most Europeans, in fact 70 to 80 percent of the population, were peasants. Peasants ranged from a few prosperous families with large holdings, such as the English yeomen, to landless laborers who barely scraped by on odd jobs. Taxes, rents, and other dues to landlords and Catholic Church officials were heavy, and poor harvests or war drove even well-to-do peasants to starvation. Not surprisingly, peasant revolts were common, but the authorities mercilessly suppressed such uprisings.

Conditions among the peasants were made even worse by a sharp rise in population, from about 55 million in 1450 to almost 100 million by 1600, and by agricultural methods whose yields were pitifully low. Families had to cooperate in plowing, sowing, and harvesting, as well as in grazing their livestock on the fallow field and the jointly owned "commons," or pastureland and forest. With new land at a premium, the commons were a tempting prize for landlords, especially the English gentry, to "enclose"—that is, to convert to private property. Peasants who had no *written* title to their land were especially vulnerable, but yeomen with strong titles often kept their land, and a few even profited by enclosing.



**The Woman Spinning** by Geertruyd Roghman  
(c. 1650) (detail)

*In early modern Europe, mothers introduced their daughters to spinning at an early age. Roghmann, one of the few women engravers of her time, specialized in depicting the daily lives of women.*

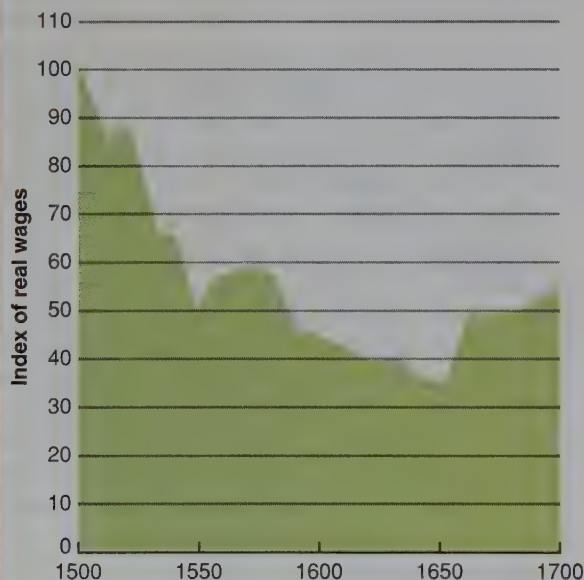
European towns were numerous but small, typically with several thousand inhabitants each. A great metropolis like London, whose population ballooned from 55,000 in 1550 to 200,000 in 1600, was quite exceptional. But all towns were dirty and disease-ridden, and townspeople lived close-packed with their neighbors.

Unappealing as sixteenth-century towns might seem today, many men and women of the time viewed them as preferable to the villages and tiny farms they left behind. Immigration from the countryside—rather than an excess of urban births over deaths—accounted for towns' expansion. Most people who flocked into towns remained at the bottom of the social order as servants or laborers who often failed to accumulate enough money to marry and live independently. Manufacturing took place in household workshops, where subordinate workers were dependent on an artisan master. Successful artisans and merchants formed guilds to control employment, prices, and the sale of goods. Dominated by the richest citizens, urban governments enforced social conformity by "sumptuary laws" that forbade dressing inappropriately to one's social rank.

The consequences of rapid population growth were particularly acute in England, where the number of people doubled from about 2.5 million in 1500 to 5 million in 1620. In parts of the countryside, landowners united to divide the commons among themselves, raise sheep, and grow rich selling wool. But with textile-manufacturing technology largely unchanged, per capita output and real household income among textile workers fell. In effect, more workers competed for fewer jobs in the face of diminishing European markets for English cloth and rapidly rising prices for food. Enclosures aggravated unemployment, forcing large numbers of people to wander the countryside in search of work and so making England's population highly mobile. To the upper and middle classes, these poor vagabonds seemed to threaten law and order. To control them, Parliament passed "Poor Laws" that ordered vagrants whipped and sent home, where hard-pressed taxpayers maintained them on relief.

### Decline in Real Wages in England, 1500–1700

*This index measures the drop in purchasing power due to inflation and declining wages. It indicates that by around 1630, living standards for English workers had declined by about two-thirds since the base year, 1500.*



Source: E. H. Phelps Brown and S. V. Hopkins, "Builders' Wage-Rates, Prices and Population: Some Further Evidence," *Economica*, XXVI (1959): 18–38; adapted from D. C. North and R. P. Thomas, *The Rise of the Western World: A New Economic History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 111.

As in America and Africa, traditional society in Europe rested on maintaining long-term, reciprocal relationships. But because its aim was the smooth functioning of social relationships between individuals of unequal status, European reciprocity required the upper classes to act with self-restraint and dignity, and the lower classes to show deference to their "betters." It also demanded strict economic regulation to ensure that sellers charged a "just price"—one that covered costs and allowed the seller a "reasonable" living standard but that barred him from taking advantage of buyers' and borrowers' misfortunes or of shortages to make "excessive" profits.

Yet for several centuries Europeans had been compromising the ideals of traditional economic behavior. "In the Name of God and of Profit," thirteenth-century Italian merchants had written on their ledgers. By the sixteenth century, nothing could stop the charging of interest on borrowed money or sellers' price increases in response to demand. New forms of business organization slowly spread in the commercial world—especially the impersonal joint-stock company with many investors, the ancestor of the modern corporation. Demand rose for capital investment, and so did the supply of accumulated wealth. Slowly a new economic outlook took form that justified both the unimpeded acquisition of wealth and unregulated economic competition, and insisted that individuals owed one another nothing but the money necessary to settle each market transaction. This new outlook, the central value system of capitalism or the "market economy," was the opposite of traditional demands for the strict regulation of economic activity to ensure social reciprocity and maintain "just prices."

Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europeans therefore held conflicting attitudes toward economic enterprise and social change, and their ambivalence remained unresolved. In Europe itself and in transplanted Europeans' colonial communities, a restless desire for fresh opportunity kept life simmering with competitive tension. But those who prospered still sought the security and prestige provided by traditional social distinctions, whereas the poor longed for the age-old values that they hoped would restrain irresponsible greed.

Perhaps the most sensitive barometer of social change was the family. Throughout Europe the typical household consisted of a small nuclear family—two parents and two or three children—in which the husband and father functioned as a head whose authority



was not to be questioned. The role of the wife and mother was to bear and rear children as well as assist her husband in the unending labor of providing for the family's subsistence. Children were regarded as potential laborers who would assist in these tasks until they left home to start their own families. The household, then, was not only a family of intimately related people but the principal economic unit in European society. Peasants on their tiny farms, artisans and merchants in their shops, and even nobles in their castles all lived and worked in households. People who did not live with their own families resided as dependents in the households of others as servants, apprentices, or simply as relatives. Europeans regarded those who lived outside households with extreme suspicion, often accusing them of crime or even witchcraft.

In a common cliché of the age, the nuclear family was a "little commonwealth." The father's government within the family was supposed to mirror God's rule over Creation and the king's lordship over his subjects. Even grown sons and daughters regularly knelt for their father's blessing. The ideal, according to a German writer, was that "wives should obey their husbands and not seek to dominate them; they must manage the home efficiently. Husbands . . . should treat their wives with consideration and occasionally close an eye to their faults." In practice, the father's sovereignty often had to make room for the wife's responsibility in managing family affairs and helping to run the farm or the workshop. And repeated male complaints (such as that of an English author in 1622) about wives "who think themselves every way as good as their husbands, and no way inferior to them," suggested that male domination had its limits.

### ***Religious Upheavals***

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. . . . And God said, Let us make man in our image . . . and let them have dominion . . . over all the earth. . . . So God created man in his own image, . . . male and female he created them." Most sixteenth-century Europeans firmly believed in this biblical explanation of the origins of the world and its peoples. Christianity, to which the vast majority adhered, taught that Jesus Christ, God's Son, had redeemed sinners by suffering crucifixion and rising from the dead. Equally vivid was their belief in the devil, Satan, whom God had hurled from heaven soon after the Creation and who ceaselessly lured people to damnation by tempting



**The Banker and His Wife, by Quentin Metsys, 1514**

*Despite religious admonitions against excessive material gain, some sixteenth-century Europeans sought to reconcile profit with piety. In this portrait, a banker weighs gold coins to ensure their accurate value as his wife, watching him, holds a prayer book.*

them to do evil. The non-Christian European minority encompassed small Jewish communities and Muslims in the Balkans and in Spain. But all Europe's population—Christians, Jews, and Muslims—worshiped a single supreme being, based on the God of the Old Testament.

Although Christianity had sunk deep roots into Europeans' consciousness by the sixteenth century, many also retained beliefs that originated outside the Christian tradition. Many Europeans feared witches, and many thought that individuals could manipulate nature by invoking unseen spiritual powers—that is, by magic. Others looked to astrology, which insisted that a person's fate depended on the conjunction of various planets and stars. Such supernaturalism had more in common with Native Americans and African mind sets than any of these traditional belief systems have with more modern world views.

The Catholic Church, based in Rome, taught that Christ's sacrifice was repeated every time a priest said Mass, and that divine grace flowed to sinners through



### Major Religions in Europe, c. 1560

*Sixteenth-century Europe teemed with religious change and conflict.*

the sacraments that consecrated priests alone could administer—above all, baptism, confession, and the Eucharist (communion). The Church was a huge network of clergymen, set apart from laypeople by the fact that they did not marry. At the top was the pope, the “vicar (representative) of Christ,” whose authority reached most of central and western Europe.

The papacy wielded awesome spiritual power. Fifteenth- and early-sixteenth-century popes dispensed extra blessings, or “indulgences,” to repentant sinners in return for such “good works” as donating money to the Church. Indulgences promised time off from future punishment in purgatory, where souls atoned for sins they had already confessed and been forgiven. (Hell, from which there was no escape, awaited those who died unforgiven.) Given people’s anxieties over “sinful” behavior, indulgences were enormously popular. The jingle of one successful indulgence seller in early-sixteenth-century Germany promised that

As soon as the coin in the cash box rings,  
The soul from purgatory’s fire springs.

The sale of indulgences provoked charges that the materialism and corruption infecting economic life had spread to the Church. In 1517 the German friar Martin Luther (1483–1546) attacked the practice. When the papacy tried to silence him, Luther broadened his criticism to encompass the Mass, purgatory, priests, and the pope. Luther’s revolt initiated the Protestant\* Reformation, which changed Christianity forever.

To Luther, indulgence selling and similar examples of clerical corruption were evil not just because they bilked people. The Church, he charged, also gave people false confidence that they could “earn” salvation by doing good works. His own agonizing search for salvation had convinced Luther that God alone chose whom to save from damnation and that believers could trust only God’s love. “I did not love a just and angry God, but rather hated and murmured against him,” recalled Luther, “until I saw the connection between the justice of God and the [New Testament] statement that ‘the just shall live [be saved] by faith.’ . . . Thereupon I felt myself to be reborn and to have gone through open doors into paradise.” Luther’s spiritual struggle and experience of being “reborn” constituted a classic conversion experience—the heart of Protestant religion as it soon would be preached and practiced in northern Europe and North America.

Other reformers arose to challenge Luther’s interpretation of God’s Word. Whereas Luther stressed faith in Christ as the key to salvation, the great French reformer John Calvin (1509–1564) insisted on the stark doctrine of predestination, in which an omnipotent God “predestined” most sinful humans to hell, saving only a few to exemplify his grace. And Calvinists and Lutherans, as the followers of the two Reformation leaders came to be called, were equally horrified by more radical Protestants such as the Anabaptists, who appealed strongly to women and common people with their criticisms of the rich and powerful and sought to restrict baptism to “converted” adults. Judging the Anabaptists a threat to the social order, governments and mainstream churches persecuted them.

But Protestants also shared much common ground. For one thing, they placed a high value on reading. Luther’s own conversion had sprung from his long study of the Bible, and Protestants demanded that

\* The word *Protestant* comes from the *protest* of Luther’s princely supporters against Holy Roman Emperor Charles V’s anti-Lutheran policies.



God's Word be translated from Latin into spoken languages and read carefully by believers, not solely by priests. The new faith was spread best by the newly invented printing press; wherever Protestantism became established, basic education and religious indoctrination followed. Protestantism also denied that God had endowed priests with special powers. Instead, Luther claimed, the church was a "priesthood of all believers." Protestant reformers insisted that laypeople take responsibility for their own spiritual and moral conditions. Finally, Protestantism represented a yearning in many people for the simplicity and purity of the ancient Christian church. More than Catholicism, it condemned the replacement of traditional reciprocity by marketplace values. In a world of troubling change, it could forge individuals of strong moral determination and equip them with the fortitude to survive and prosper amid the temptations of worldly wealth. Protestantism's greatest appeal was to all those—ordinary individuals, merchants, and aristocrats alike—who brooded over their chances for salvation and valued the steady performance of duty.

In the face of the Protestant challenge, Rome was far from idle. Catholic reform had begun in Spain even before Luther's revolt, and soon the papacy vigorously attacked corruption and combated Protestant viewpoints on major religious issues. The popes also sponsored a new religious order fervently committed to the papacy: the Jesuits, whose members would distinguish themselves for centuries as missionaries and royal advisers. This Catholic revival, the Counter-Reformation, brought into existence the modern Roman Catholic Church.

Together the Reformation and Counter-Reformation reinforced a new crusading spirit in Europe, recently bolstered by Spain's fifteenth-century expulsions of Muslims and of Jews who refused to become Christians. Coinciding with the emergence of nation-states and overseas expansion, this spirit frequently gave Europeans a justification for assuming themselves superior to the non-Christian peoples of the Americas and Africa and for seizing their land, resources, and labor.

The Reformation also changed the map of western Europe. While the tiny states comprising the modern nations of Germany and Switzerland were divided among Catholics, Lutherans, and Calvinists, Lutheranism became the state religion in the Scandinavian countries and Calvinism made significant inroads in France, the Netherlands (ruled by Spain), and Eng-

land, where it competed with Catholicism and with the moderately reformed Church of England.

### *The Rise of Puritanism in England*

England's Reformation began not with the writings of a theologian or with cries of the people, but with the actions of a king and Parliament. King Henry VIII (ruled 1509–1547) wanted a male heir but his queen, Catherine of Aragon, failed to bear a son. Frustrated and determined, Henry asked the pope to annul his marriage; equally determined, the pope refused. Henry then persuaded Parliament, in a series of acts in 1533–1534, to dissolve his marriage and proclaim him "supreme head" of the Church of England (or Anglican Church).

Religion remained a source of trouble in England for well over a century after Henry's break with Rome. Under Edward VI (ruled 1547–1553), the church veered sharply toward Protestantism; then Mary I (ruled 1553–1558) tried to restore Catholicism, in part by burning several hundred Protestants at the stake.

The reign of Elizabeth I (ruled 1558–1603) marked a crucial watershed. After "Bloody Mary," most English people were ready to become Protestant; *how* Protestant was the divisive question. A militant Calvinist movement called Puritanism had arisen. Puritans demanded a wholesale "purification" of the Church of England from "popish [Catholic] abuses." As Calvinists, they affirmed salvation by predestination, denied Christ's presence in the Eucharist, and believed that a learned sermon was the heart of true worship. They wished to free each congregation and its minister from outside interference by bishops and encouraged lay members (nonclergy) to participate in parish affairs. Above all, Puritans argued that membership in a true Christian church must be reserved exclusively for those who had had a *conversion experience*. At this moment, a soul confronted the horrifying truth of its own unworthiness and felt the transcending power of God's saving grace. Through a process known as sanctification, the new convert was cemented to God as a "saint," or member of the "elect," chosen by God for salvation. Whereas membership in the Church of England was automatic for anyone born in England, only saints could join Puritan congregations.

The severe self-discipline and moral uprightness demanded of Puritans appealed to only a few from the titled nobility, with their inherited wealth and privileges, and from the desperate poor, whose lives were consumed by the quest for physical survival. Puritanism's

primary appeal lay instead among the small but growing number of people between the extremes of English society—landowning gentry, university-educated clergymen and intellectuals, merchants, shopkeepers, artisans, and yeoman farmers. Self-discipline had become central to both the secular and spiritual dimensions of these people's lives. From their ranks, and particularly from the farmers, artisans, and clergymen, would later come the settlers of New England (see Chapter 3).

Elizabeth distrusted Puritan militancy but, after 1570, when the pope declared her a heretic and urged Catholics to overthrow her, she regarded English Catholics as even more dangerous. Thereafter, she courted influential Puritans and embraced militant anti-Catholicism.

Under Elizabeth, most Puritans had come to expect that they would eventually transform the Church of England into independent congregations of “saints.” But her successor, James I (ruled 1603–1625), the founder of England's Stuart dynasty, bitterly opposed Puritan efforts to eliminate the office of bishop, making clear that he saw Puritan attacks on bishops as a direct threat to the throne when he snapped, “No bishop, no king.” After Charles I became king in 1625, Anglican authorities undertook a systematic campaign to eliminate Puritan influence within the church. With the king's backing, bishops insisted that services be conducted according to the Book of Common Prayer, which prescribed rituals similar to Catholic practices, and they dismissed Puritan ministers who refused to perform these “High Church” rites. Church courts, which judged cases involving religious law, harassed the Puritan laity with fines or excommunication.

Religious oppression, along with dwindling economic opportunities, made leading a godly life difficult for many Puritans. One minister wrote that everyone in England was tempted “to pluck his means, as it were, out of his neighbor's throat.” Such conditions led many Puritans to consider migrating to New England after 1620 (see below and Chapter 3).

## European Expansion

Whereas European wealth at the beginning of the fifteenth century centered on Mediterranean city-states such as Florence and Venice, the ensuing hundred years witnessed the rise of Atlantic nation-states whose monarchs had consolidated their power over vast territories. Among these, the most prominent were Portu-

gal, Spain (recently formed through the marriage of Queen Isabella of Castile and King Ferdinand of Aragon), France, and England. During the sixteenth century, these nations would lead Europe's expansion over the oceans of the world and set the stage for the colonization of North America.

### *Seaborne Expansion*

The earliest efforts at European expansion were primarily commercial rather than territorial. While European merchants had long traded with Asia and Africa by way of the Mediterranean (see above), some recognized that such trade would yield only limited profits unless Europeans could establish more direct contacts with the sources of prized imports and with overseas markets for exports. During the fifteenth century, tiny Portugal led the way in overcoming impediments to long-distance travel on the Atlantic Ocean. The most significant outcome of Portuguese pioneering was to begin Europe's massive trade in black African slaves. By the following century, the most powerful nations of western Europe had transformed the Atlantic from a barrier to a busy passageway for both people and goods.

Important changes in maritime technology occurred in the early fifteenth century. Shipbuilders and mariners along Europe's stormy Atlantic coast added the triangular Arab sail to the heavy cargo ships they used for voyaging between England and the Mediterranean. They created a more maneuverable vessel, the caravel, that could sail against the wind. Sailors also mastered the compass and astrolabe, by which they got their bearings on the open sea. Without this “maritime revolution,” European exploration would have been impossible.

Renaissance scholars' search for more accurate readings of ancient texts forced fifteenth-century Europeans to look at their world with new eyes. The great ancient Greek authority on geography was Ptolemy, but cartographers had to correct his data when they tried to draw accurate maps. Thus Renaissance “new learning” combined with older Arabic and European advances in mathematics to sharpen Europeans' geographic sense.

Led by Prince Henry “the Navigator” (1394–1460), Portugal was the first nation to capitalize on these developments. Henry gained the support of merchants seeking to circumvent Moroccan control of the African-European gold trade and of religious zealots eager to confront Muslim power. At the same time he hoped



eventually to find a sea route to Asia that would enable Portugal to bypass Mediterranean traders in tapping the markets of that continent as well. Henry encouraged Portuguese seamen to pilot the new caravels farther down the African coast, searching for weak spots in Muslim defenses and for opportunities to trade profitably. At the time of his death, the Portuguese operated a successful gold-making factory at Arguin and had established trade ties south of the Sahara. In 1488 Bartolomeu Dias reached the Cape of Good Hope at Africa's southern tip. A decade later Vasco da Gama led a Portuguese fleet around the Cape of Good Hope and on to India.

Ultimately the Portuguese failed to destroy older Euro-Asian commercial links, although for a century they remained an imperial presence in the Indian Ocean and present-day Indonesia. Meanwhile, they had brought Europeans face-to-face with black Africans and an already flourishing slave trade.

### ***The “New Slavery” and Racism***

Slavery was well established in fifteenth-century West Africa. Kings and emperors, as well as many families, depended on slaves. But most slaves or their children were absorbed into African families over time. The eighteenth-century West African Olaudah Equiano, who had suffered enslavement by the British, explained the fate of war captives in his native society:

How different was their condition from that of the slaves in the West Indies! With us they do no more work than other members of the community, even their master. Their food, clothing, and lodging, were nearly the same as [free people's], except that they were not permitted to eat with those who were born free. . . . Some of these slaves even have slaves under them, as their own property, and for their own use.

Outsiders—first Middle Eastern and North African Muslims then European Christians—turned African slavery into an intercontinental business and tore slaves from their native societies. One fifteenth-century Italian who witnessed Portuguese and Muslim slave trading noted that the Arabs “also have many Berber horses, which they trade, and take to the Land of the Blacks, exchanging them with the rulers for slaves. Ten or fifteen slaves are given for one of these horses, according to their quality. . . . These slaves are brought to the market town of Hoden; there they are divided. . . . [Some] are taken . . . and sold to the Portuguese leaseholders [of

### **An Astrolabe**

*A device for calculating the position and elevation of the sun, stars, and planets, the astrolabe is one of the world's oldest scientific instruments. It was known to the ancient Greeks and perfected by the medieval Arabs. Ocean navigators found it indispensable. This brass English astrolabe, dating to 1326, may be the oldest such European instrument extant.*



Arguin]. As a result every year the Portuguese carry away from [Arguin] a thousand slaves.”

Equiano's eighteenth-century testimony starkly captures slaves' experience in earlier centuries too. Brought on a European slave ship, he wrote,

I was now persuaded that I had got into a world of bad spirits, and that they were going to kill me. Their complexions differing so much from ours, their long hair, and the languages they spoke . . . united to confirm me in this belief. . . . Quite overpowered with shock and horror, I . . . fainted. When I recovered a little, I found some black people around me, who I believed were some of those who brought me on board, and had been receiving their pay. . . . I asked them if we were not to be eaten by those white men. . . . They told me I was not. [But] soon after this the blacks who had brought me on board went off, and left me abandoned to despair. . . . I found some of my own nation [and] inquired . . . what was to be done with us? They gave me to understand that we were to be carried to these white people's country to work for them. I then was a little revived . . . but still I feared I should be put to death, the white people looked, as I thought, so savage. . . .



**African View of Portuguese,  
c. 1650–1700**

*A carver in the kingdom of Benin, on Africa's west coast, created this saltholder depicting Portuguese officials and their ship.*

The Portuguese found slave trading lucrative and kept out competitors until after 1600. Although in 1482 they built an outpost, Elmina, on West Africa's Gold Coast, they exploited existing African commercial and social patterns. Often Portuguese merchants traded slaves and local products to other Africans for gold. The local African kingdoms were too strong for the Portuguese to attack, and black rulers traded—or chose not to trade—according to their own self-interest.

West African societies changed with the coming of Portuguese slavers. In Guinea and Senegambia, which supplied the bulk of sixteenth-century slaves, small kingdoms expanded to “service” the trade. Some of their rulers became comparatively rich. Farther south, in present-day Angola, the kings of Kongo used the

slave trade to consolidate their power and voluntarily adopted Christianity, just as earlier rulers had converted to Islam. Kongo flourished until the late sixteenth century, when rival powers from the interior destroyed it.

African political leaders and their communities used the trade as a way of disposing of “undesirables,” including slaves whom they already owned, lawbreakers, and persons accused of witchcraft. But most slaves were simply victims of raids or wars. Muslim and European slave trading greatly exacerbated conflicts among African communities.

Although European societies had used slaves since the time of ancient Greece and Rome, there were ominous differences in the European slavery that arose once the Portuguese began voyaging to West Africa. First, the unprecedented scale of the trade resulted in a demographic catastrophe for West Africa and its peoples. Before the Atlantic slave trade

finally ended in the nineteenth century, nearly 12 million Africans would be shipped in terrible conditions across the sea. Slavery on this scale had been unknown to Europeans since the collapse of the Roman Empire. Second, African slaves were subjected to new extremes of dehumanization. In medieval Europe and in West Africa itself slaves had lived in their masters' households and primarily performed domestic service. But by 1450 the Portuguese and Spanish created large slave-labor plantations on their Atlantic and Mediterranean islands. These plantations produced sugar for European markets, using capital supplied by Italian investors to buy African slaves who toiled until death. In short, the African slaves owned by Europeans were regarded as property rather than merely as persons of low status; as such, they were consigned to labor that was unending, exhausting, and mindless. By 1600 the “new slavery” had become a brutal link in a commerce that ultimately would encompass all major Western nations.

Finally, race became the explicit basis of the “new slavery.” Africans' blackness and their alien religion dehumanized them in European eyes. As their racial prejudice hardened, Europeans justified enslaving blacks with increasing ease. From the fifteenth century onward, European Christianity made few attempts to soften slavery's rigors, and race defined a slave. Because the victims of the “new slavery” were physically distinctive as well as culturally alien, slavery became a lifelong, hereditary, and despised status.

### ***Europeans Reach America***

Europeans' varying motivations for expanding their horizons converged in the fascinating, contradictory figure of Christopher Columbus (1451–1506), the son of a weaver from the Italian port of Genoa. Columbus's maritime experience, self-taught geographical learning, and keen imagination led him to conclude that Asia could be reached by sailing westward across the Atlantic. By the early 1480s this idea obsessed him. Religious fervor led Columbus to dream of carrying Christianity around the globe and liberating Jerusalem from Muslim rule, but he also burned with ambition to win wealth and glory.

Columbus would not be the first European to venture far out into the Atlantic. Besides the early Norse, fifteenth-century English fishermen may already have sailed as far west as the Grand Banks and even the North American coast. But Columbus was unique in the persistence with which he hawked his “enterprise





### Major Transatlantic Explorations, 1000–1587

Following Columbus's 1492 voyage, Spain's rivals soon began laying claim to parts of the New World based on the voyages of Cabot for England, Cabral for Portugal, and Verrazano for France. Later English and French exploration focused on finding a passage to Asia around or through Canada.

of the Indies" around the royal courts of western Europe. John II of Portugal showed interest until Días's discovery of the Cape of Good Hope promised a surer way to India. Finally, in 1492, hoping to break a threatened Portuguese monopoly on direct trade with Asia, the rulers of newly united Spain—Queen Isabella of Castile and King Ferdinand of Aragon—accepted Columbus's offer. Picking up the westward-blowing trade winds at the Canary Islands, Columbus's three small ships reached San Salvador within a month.

Word of Columbus's discovery caught Europeans' imaginations. To forestall potential rivals, Isabella and Portugal's King John II in 1494 signed the Treaty of Tordesillas, which divided all future American discoveries between Castile and Portugal. Meanwhile, Isabella had sent Columbus back to explore further, and he established a colony on Hispaniola, the Caribbean island today occupied by Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Columbus proved a poor administrator, and after his

last voyages (1498–1502), he was shunted aside. He died an embittered man, convinced that he had reached the threshold of Asia, only to be cheated of his rightful rewards.

England's Henry VII (ruled 1485–1509) ignored the Treaty of Tordesillas and in 1497 sent an Italian navigator, John Cabot, westward into the Atlantic. Cabot claimed for England Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and the rich Grand Banks fisheries. Like Columbus, Cabot thought that he had reached Asia.

The more Europeans explored, the more apparent it became that a vast landmass blocked the route to Asia. In 1500 the Portuguese claimed Brazil, and other voyages soon revealed a continuous coastline from the Caribbean to Brazil. In 1507 this landmass got its name when a publisher brought out a collection of voyagers' tales. One of the chroniclers was an Italian named Amerigo Vespucci. With a shrewd marketing touch, the publisher devised a catchy name for the new continent: America.

Getting past America and reaching Asia remained the early explorers' primary aim. In 1513 the Spaniard Vasco Núñez de Balboa chanced upon the Pacific Ocean when he crossed the narrow isthmus of Panama. Then in 1519 the Portuguese Ferdinand Magellan, sailing under the Castilian flag, began a voyage around the world by way of the stormy (later named for him) straits at South America's southern tip. In an incredible feat of endurance, he crossed the Pacific to the Philippines, only to die fighting with local natives. One of his five ships and fifteen emaciated sailors finally returned to Spain in 1522, the first people to have sailed around the world. But Europeans hoped for easier access to East Asia's fabled wealth. The French king Francis I led the search for a "northwest passage" to Asia. In 1524 he dispatched the Italian navigator Giovanni da Verrazano, who explored the North American coast from the Carolinas to Newfoundland. In three subsequent voyages between 1534 and 1542 the French ex-

plorer Jacques Cartier carefully probed the coasts of Newfoundland, Quebec, and Nova Scotia and ascended the St. Lawrence as far as present-day Montreal. Although encountering large numbers of Native Americans, Verrazano and Cartier found no gold and no northwest passage.

### Spain's Conquistadores

Columbus was America's first slave trader and the first Spanish conqueror, or *conquistador*. At his struggling colony on Hispaniola, he began exporting Indian slaves and created *encomiendas*—grants for the right to extract labor and other tribute from the Indians of a designated district. Other *conquistadores* would soon transplant this practice to the American mainland.

From the beginning *encomiendas* harshly exploited the native people, who died in droves from overwork, malnutrition, and disease. Then Portuguese slavers

#### Spanish Map of the Antilles, 1519

This map offers a rare glimpse of Spain's initial stronghold in the Caribbean islands, centering on what is now Haiti. The decorative figures are Africans, imported to replace Indian labor lost to disease and harsh treatment.







### Cortés's Entrance into Veracruz, c. 1550

The ancient Mexicans called Veracruz the "Place of Precious Stones." Mexican Lienzo de Tlaxcala's pictorial description shows Cortés transporting cannons on his march through Mexico.

stepped in, supplying shiploads of Africans to replace the perishing Indians. Spanish friars who came to Hispaniola to convert the Indians quickly sent back grim reports of Indian exploitation; and King Ferdinand (who had made money by selling *encomiendas*) felt sufficiently shocked to attempt to forbid the practice. No one, however, worried about the African slaves' fate.

Soon Spanish settlers were fanning out through the Caribbean in search of Indian slaves and gold. In 1519 the restless nobleman Hernán Cortés (1485–1547) led a small band of followers to the Mexican coast. Destroying his boats and gathering Indian allies, he marched inland over towering mountain passes to conquer Mexico.

Spaniards had dreamed of a prize such as Mexico ever since they reached America. Mexico was rich: an impressive civilization had been evolving there for three thousand years, culminating in the mighty Aztec Empire. It was exotic: the priests and soldiers who dominated the empire raided neighboring peoples to seize victims for ceremonial human sacrifices. And Mexico was highly organized. The 300,000 inhabitants of the capital, Tenochtitlán, enjoyed fresh water supplied by means of elaborate engineering works; their urban society was highly stratified; and artisans produced a profusion of finely crafted pottery as well as stone, copper, silver, and gold implements. "We were amazed and said that it was like the enchantments they tell of [in stories], and some of our soldiers even asked whether the things that we saw were not a dream," recalled one of Cortés's soldiers of his first glimpse of Tenochtitlán's pyramids, lakes, and causeways. Certainly the golden gifts that the Aztecs offered in the vain hope of buying off the invaders were no dream. "They

picked up the gold and fingered it like monkeys," recalled an Indian. "Their bodies swelled with greed, and their hunger was ravenous. They hungered like pigs for that gold."

Cortés attacked and swiftly prevailed. He owed his astonishing victories partly to firearms and horses, which terrified the Aztecs, and partly to initial Aztec suppositions that the Spanish were the white, bearded gods whose return ancient legends had foretold. His success also resulted from his boldness and cunning, the Aztec emperor Moctezuma's fears, epidemics among the Indians, and the revolt of the Aztecs' subject peoples. By 1521 Cortés had overthrown the Aztecs and begun to build Mexico City on the ruins of Tenochtitlán. Soon the last Aztec emperor suffered defeat and execution, and within twenty years Central America lay at the Spaniards' feet. New Spain was born.

During the rest of the sixteenth century, other *conquistadores* and officials consolidated a great Hispanic empire stretching from New Spain (Mexico) to Chile. The human cost of the conquest was enormous. Mourned a vanquished Aztec,

Broken spears lie in the roads;  
We have torn our hair in our grief.  
The houses are roofless now . . .  
And the walls are splattered with gore . . .  
We have pounded our hands in despair  
Against the adobe walls.

When Cortés landed in 1519, central Mexico's population had been about 25 million. By 1600 it had shrunk to between 1 million and 2 million. Peru and other regions experienced similar devastation. America had witnessed the greatest demographic disaster in world history.

## The Columbian Exchange

Warfare, forced labor, starvation, and mass slaughter accounted for some of the catastrophe of European conquest, but the greatest killers were microbes. Native Americans lacked antibodies to European and African infections—above all, the deadly, highly communicable smallpox. From the first years of contact, frightful epidemics decimated Indian communities. In the West Indian islands, the entire native population perished within fifty years, and devastation from disease facilitated the colonization of mainland North America. “The people began to die very fast, and many in a short space,” an Englishman later remarked, adding that the deaths invariably occurred after Europeans had visited an Indian village. From early in the sixteenth century, raging epidemics of smallpox and other alien maladies scourged the defenseless Indians. Whole villages perished at once, with no one left to bury the dead. Up to 90 percent of the native population in some areas was lost.

Yet the “Columbian exchange”—the biological encounter of the Eastern and Western Hemispheres—was not limited to deadly germs. In addition to diseases, sixteenth-century Europeans brought horses, cattle, sheep, swine, chickens, wheat and other grains, coffee, sugar cane, numerous fruits and garden vegetables, and an astonishing variety of weeds, insects, and rodents to America. In the next century, African slaves carried rice and yams with them across the Atlantic. The list of American gifts to the Eastern Hemisphere was equally impressive: corn, many varieties of beans, white and sweet potatoes, the tropical root crop manioc, tomatoes, squash, pumpkins, peanuts, vanilla, cacao, avocados, pineapples, chilis, tobacco, and turkeys. Often several centuries passed before new plants became widely accepted across the ocean; for example, many Europeans suspected that potatoes and tomatoes were either poisons or aphrodisiacs until the nineteenth century, and few Indians were eager to grow wheat. European weeds and domestic animals drastically altered many environments in the Western Hemisphere, especially in North America, overwhelming indigenous plantlife and thereby driving away wild animals who fed on those plants. In this way, colonists’ ways of life impinged directly on the lives of native peoples. Settlers’ crops, intensively cultivated on lands never replenished by lying fallow, often exhausted American soil. But the worldwide exchange of food products also enriched human diets and later made possible enormous population growth.

Another dimension of the transatlantic encounters was the mixing of peoples. During the sixteenth century, about 300,000 Spaniards immigrated, 90 percent of them male. Particularly in towns, a racially blended people emerged as these men married Indian women, giving rise to the large *mestizo* (mixed Spanish-Indian) population of Mexico and other Latin American countries. *Métis*, as the French termed people of both Indian and European descent, would appear in lesser proportions in the French and English colonies of North America. Throughout the Americas, particularly in plantation colonies, European men fathered *mulatto* children with African women, most of them slaves, and African-Indian unions occurred in nearly all regions. But the context for these population transfers and mixtures was the massive migrations of Europeans and enslaved Africans and the wholesale extermination of Native Americans through disease and violence.

The Americas supplied seemingly limitless wealth for Spain. Not only did some Spaniards grow rich from West Indian sugar plantations and Mexican sheep and cattle ranches, but immense quantities of silver crossed the Atlantic after rich mines in Mexico and Peru began producing in the 1540s. A robust trade between America and Spain grew up, which Castilian officials tried to regulate. Spain took in far more American silver than its economy could absorb, setting off inflation that eventually engulfed all Europe. Bent on dominating Europe, the Spanish kings needed ever more American silver to finance their wars. Several times they went bankrupt, and their efforts to squeeze more taxes from their subjects provoked in the 1560s the revolt of Spain’s rich Netherlands provinces. In the end, gaining access to American wealth cost Spain dearly.

## Footholds in North America

As early as 1510, the flow of wealth from the Americas to Spain attracted swarms of Europeans. While most flocked to Mexico, the Caribbean, and points farther south, some Europeans grew familiar with the North American coast through exploratory voyages, fishing expeditions, a small-scale fur trade, and piracy and smuggling. But except for a Spanish base at St. Augustine, Florida, their attempts to plant colonies failed. These failures did not stem from lack of effort. Would-be conquerors and colonizers tried many times to establish the presence of Spain, France, or England on North American soil. But they predicated their efforts on unrealistic expectations of fabulous wealth and pliant natives.



As the seventeenth century dawned, the ravaging of Indian populations owing to disease, and the rise of English, French, and Dutch power finally made colonization possible. By 1614 Spain, England, France, and the Netherlands had established secure North American bases. Within another decade, each colony developed a distinct economic orientation, as well as patterns of Indian relations and geographic expansion. Thus the first quarter of the seventeenth century marked the formative period of North America's modern history.

### *New Spain's Northern Frontier*

The Spanish had built their American empire by subduing the Aztec and other Indian states, whose riches had attracted the invaders like a magnet. The dream of more such finds drew would-be *conquistadores* to the borderlands north of Mexico. "As it was his object to find another treasure like that . . . of Peru," a witness wrote of one such man, Hernando de Soto, he "would not be content with good lands nor pearls."

The earliest of these invaders was Juan Ponce de León, the conqueror of Puerto Rico, who in 1512–1513 and again in 1521 trudged through Florida in search of gold and slaves. His quest ended in death in an Indian skirmish. The most astonishing early expedition began in Florida in 1527. After provoking several attacks by Apalachee Indians, the three hundred explorers were separated into several parties. All were thought to have perished until eight years later, when four survivors, led by Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca and including an African slave, Estevanico, arrived in northern Mexico. Cabeza de Vaca's account of their journey from Florida through Texas and New Mexico is the most compelling European literary work on North America before permanent colonization.

Cabeza de Vaca provided direct inspiration for the two most formidable attempts at Spanish conquest. De Soto and his party in 1539–1543 blundered from Tampa Bay to the Appalachians to southern Texas. Scouring the land for gold, de Soto harried the Indians mercilessly. "Think, then," an Indian chief appealed to him vainly,

what must be the effect on me and mine, of the sight of you and your people, whom we have at no time seen, astride the fierce brutes, your horses, entering with such speed and fury into my country, that we had no tidings of your coming—things so absolutely new, as to strike awe and terror into our hearts.

Although de Soto died without finding any gold or conquering any Indians, his and other expeditions caused epidemics that destroyed most of the remaining Mississippian societies (see Chapter 1). By the time Europeans returned to the southeastern interior late in the seventeenth century, only the Natchez on the lower Mississippi River still inhabited their sumptuous temple-mound center and remained under the rule of a Great Sun monarch. Depopulated groups like the Cherokees and Creeks had adopted the less centralized village life of other eastern Indians.

As de Soto roamed the Southeast, some Spanish officials in Mexico were drawn by rumors that the fabled Seven Golden Cities of Cibola lay to the north. In 1540–1542, Francisco Vázquez de Coronado led a massive expedition bent on locating, and subjugating, these cities of gold. Coronado plundered several pueblos and wandered from the Grand Canyon to Kansas before returning to Mexico, finding no gold but embittering many Native Americans. Other expeditions, along the

### **The Spanish and Portuguese Empires, 1610**

*By 1610 Spain dominated Latin America, including Portugal's possessions. Having devoted its energies to exploiting Mexico and the Caribbean, Spain had not yet expanded into what is now the United States, aside from establishing outposts in Florida and New Mexico.*





### Navajo View of Spanish Colonizers

*This pictograph—a painting or drawing on rock—was sketched in the early colonial period in Cañón del Muerto, Arizona.*

California coast and up the Colorado River, likewise proved fruitless.

For several decades after these failed ventures, Spain's principal interest north of Mexico and the Caribbean lay in establishing strategic bases to keep out French and English intruders. In 1565 Spain established the first successful European settlement in North America, a powerful fortress at St. Augustine, Florida. Despite efforts to strengthen Florida and to build forts linking it to Mexico, St. Augustine remained only a military stronghold and a base for a chain of religious missions extending north to Chesapeake Bay. Rejecting missionary efforts to reorder their lives, the Indians rebelled and forced the closing of all the missions before 1600.

Franciscan missionaries renewed their efforts in Florida in the early seventeenth century and secured the nominal allegiance of about sixteen thousand Guale and Timucuan Indians. But epidemics in the 1610s killed about half the converts.

Meanwhile, in the 1580s, Spanish friars had returned to the Southwest, preaching Christianity and scouting the area's potential wealth. Encouraged by their reports, in 1598 Juan de Oñate led five hundred Spaniards, mestizos, Mexican Indians, and African slaves into the upper Rio Grande Valley, where he proclaimed the royal colony of New Mexico, distributed *encomiendas*, and demanded tribute from the pueblo-dwelling Indians.

The new colony barely survived. The Spanish government replaced Oñate in 1606 because of misman-

agement and excessive brutality toward the Indians. His successor founded Santa Fe in 1610, but many colonists established ranches nearer the pueblos in order to exploit Indian labor. New Mexico survived primarily through the efforts of Franciscan missionaries. By 1630 they had converted about twenty thousand Indians and established more than fifty missions in the Rio Grande Valley and westward 250 miles to the Hopi villages in Arizona.

### France: Initial Failures and Canadian Success

The voyages of Verrazano and Cartier (see above) began France's interest in North America. France made the first attempt at colonizing in North America in 1541, when Jacques Cartier led ten ships carrying four hundred soldiers, three hundred sailors, and a few women to the St. Lawrence Valley. Cartier had already alienated many Indians along the St. Lawrence during two previous expeditions, and his construction of a fortified settlement on Indian land cut off all possibility of native support. Over the next two years, the French suffered heavy casualties from Indian attacks and from scurvy (for which the Indians could have shown them a cure) before abandoning the colony.

The failed French expedition seemed to verify the Spanish opinion, voiced by the cardinal of Seville, that "this whole coast as far [south] as Florida is utterly unproductive." The next French effort at colonization came in 1562, when French Huguenots (Calvinists)



## European Settlements in Eastern North America, 1565–1625

*Except for St. Augustine, Florida, and Santa Fe, New Mexico, all European settlements founded before 1607 were abandoned by 1625. Despite the migration of ten thousand Europeans to North America's Atlantic coast by 1625, the total number of Spanish, English, French, and Dutch on the continent was then about eighteen hundred, of whom two-thirds lived in Virginia.*

briefly established a base in what is now South Carolina. In 1564 the Huguenots founded a settlement near modern-day Jacksonville, Florida, which the Spanish destroyed a year later, massacring all 132 male defenders. These failures, along with a civil war between French Catholics and Huguenots, temporarily hindered the French from further attempts at colonization.

Meanwhile, French and other European fishers were working the plenteous Grand Banks fisheries of the North Atlantic. Going ashore to dry their fish, some French sailors bartered with coastal Indians for skins of the beaver, a species almost extinct in Europe. By the late sixteenth century, as European demand for beaver hats skyrocketed, a French-dominated fur trade blossomed. Before the end of the century, French traders were returning annually to sites from Newfoundland to Maine and along the lower St. Lawrence.

Unlike explorers such as de Soto and colonizers such as those at Roanoke (see below), the traders recognized the importance of reciprocity in dealing with the Indians. Consequently, they were generally more successful. In exchange for pelts, they traded metal tools such as axes and knives, cloth, and glass beads. Seen by the Europeans as “trinkets,” glass beads to the Indians had the same supernatural power as quartz, mica, and other sacred substances obtained via trade networks for thousands of years. By the next century specialized factories in Europe would be producing both cloth and glass for the “Indian trade.”

Between 1598 and 1604, a series of government-sponsored French fur-trading outposts appeared in Acadia (modern-day Nova Scotia). And in 1608 the first enduring French settlement on Canadian soil was founded by Samuel de Champlain at Quebec, far up the St. Lawrence River. Champlain wintered there with twenty-eight men, of whom twenty died.

In order to strengthen the fragile colony, Champlain the next year allied with nearby Indians and aided them in defeating their Mohawk Iroquois enemies (see A





### **New Amsterdam**

After the Dutch “purchase” of Manhattan Island, the fortified settlement of New Amsterdam grew only slowly, as this view from 1651 (the earliest known depiction) clearly shows. Except for the tip, the island remained farmland or forest. Corn brought by canoe-paddling Indians also helped feed the settlement. Note the windmill, where grain was ground.

Place in Time). Through their alliance with the powerful Hurons, the French gained access to the thick beaver pelts of the Canadian interior in exchange for providing protection from the Iroquois. These economic and diplomatic arrangements defined the course of New France’s history for the rest of the seventeenth century.

### ***The Enterprising Dutch***

By 1588 the independence of the Protestant, Dutch-speaking part of Spain’s rebellious Netherlands provinces was secure, although the southern Netherlands—modern Belgium and Luxembourg—would remain under Spanish rule until 1713. The Dutch Republic, one of the seventeenth century’s great powers, built an empire stretching from Brazil to West Africa to what is now Indonesia. North America was for them a relatively minor sphere of activity. Even so, the Dutch played a key role in colonizing the continent.

Having established lucrative ties with Indians on the lower Hudson River (see *A Place in Time*), Dutch traders in 1614 built Fort Nassau near what would become Albany, and established the colony of New Netherland. In 1626 the Dutch bought an island at the mouth of the Hudson from local Indians and began a second settlement there. The Dutch named the island Manhattan and the settlement New Amsterdam.

New Netherlanders lived by the fur trade. Through the Mohawks, they relied on the Iroquois Confederacy, much as the French depended on the Hurons. To stimulate a flow of furs to New Netherland, in the 1620s Dutch traders obtained from Indians near Long Island

Sound large quantities of wampum (tiny seashells denoting spiritual power, which Native Americans had long traded throughout the continent’s interior) and used it to buy beaver pelts inland. Backed respectively by the French and the Dutch, Hurons and Iroquois became embroiled in an ever-deepening contest to control the movement of goods between Europeans and Indians.

### ***Elizabethan England and the Wider World***

In 1558, when Elizabeth I became queen, England was a minor power and stood on the sidelines as Spain and France grappled for supremacy in Europe. At that time, England and Spain were enjoying friendly relations. But the English worried about Spain’s intervention in France’s religious wars and its determined effort to crush the Dutch revolt, as well as about the pope’s call for Elizabeth’s overthrow. Furthermore, in 1568 the Spanish authorities in Mexico had chased pesky English privateers, including John Hawkins and Francis Drake, from the Caribbean. Secretly, Elizabeth stepped up her aid to Calvinist rebels in France and the Netherlands, and to “sea dogs” like Hawkins and Drake—from whose voyages she took a share of the plunder. In the 1570s she encouraged merchants to invest in Atlantic-oriented ventures.

Meanwhile, England’s position in Ireland was deteriorating. As early as 1565, English troops fought to impose colonial rule throughout the island. The conflict intensified when the pope and the Spanish began directly aiding Irish Catholics’ resistance to the English. In



the ensuing war that ground on through the 1580s, the English drove the Irish clans out of their strongholds, especially in northern Ireland, or Ulster, and established their own settlements (“plantations”) of English and Scottish Protestants. The English practiced total war to break the rebellious population’s spirit, inflicting starvation and mass slaughter by destroying villages in the winter.

Elizabeth’s generals justified these atrocities by claiming that the Irish were “savages.” Ireland thus furnished precedents for strategies that the English later employed against North American Indians, whose customs, religion, and method of fighting likewise seemed to absolve the English from guilt in waging exceptionally cruel warfare.

England had two objectives in the Western Hemisphere in the 1570s. The first was to find the northwest passage to Asia and if possible to discover gold on the way; the second, in Drake’s words, was to “sing the king of Spain’s beard” by raiding Spanish fleets and ports from Spain to the West Indies. The search for the northwest passage only led to such embarrassments as explorer Martin Frobisher’s return from the Canadian Arctic with a shipload of “fool’s gold.” However, privateering raids on the Spanish were both spectacularly successful and profitable for Drake’s and Hawkins’s financial backers, including merchants, gentry, government leaders, and Elizabeth herself. The most breathtaking enterprise was Drake’s voyage around the world (1577–1580) in quest of sites for colonies. During this voyage he sailed up the California coast and entered Drake’s Bay, north of San Francisco, where he traded with Miwok Indians.

Now deadly rivals, Spain and England sought to outmaneuver one another in America. In 1572 the Spanish tried to fortify a Jesuit mission on the Chesapeake Bay. They failed, largely because Powhatan Indians resisted. After an attempt to colonize Newfoundland failed, Raleigh obtained a royal patent (charter) to start an English colony farther south, closer to the Spanish—the region that the English had already named Virginia in honor of their virgin queen. Raleigh dispatched Arthur Barlowe to explore the region, and Barlowe returned singing the praises of Roanoke Island and its peaceable natives. Raleigh then persuaded Elizabeth to dispatch ships and a company of soldiers to launch a colony at Roanoke.

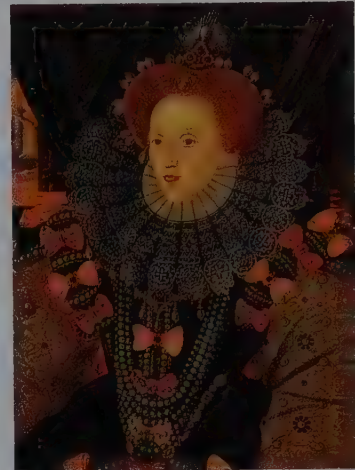
At first all went well. The Roanoke Indians eagerly traded and shared their corn—which they grew with amazing ease. Given such abundance and native hospi-

talities, the colonists wondered why they should work at all. Refusing to grow their own food, they expected the Indians to feed them. By the first winter, they had outlived their welcome. Fearing that the Roanokes were about to attack, English soldiers killed Wingina, the Roanoke leader, in June 1586. When Raleigh’s friend Drake stopped in soon after on his way back to England, most of the English joined him.

Thereafter the growing Anglo-Spanish conflict repeatedly prevented English ships from sailing back to Roanoke. When a rescue party finally arrived in 1590, it found only rusty armor, moldy books, and the word *CROATOAN* cut into a post. What had happened to the “lost colony”? Historians will never know with certainty.

Roanoke’s brief history illustrates several stubborn realities about early European experiences in North America. First, even a large-scale, well-financed colonizing effort could fail, given the settlers’ unpreparedness for the American environment. Second, colonists did not bring enough provisions for the first winter and consistently disdained growing their own food. Although some early English settlers were curious and open-minded about the Indians’ way of life, all assumed that the natives would submit to their authority and feed them while they looked for gold—a sure recipe for trouble. Third, colonizing attempts would have to be self-financing: financially strapped monarchs like Elizabeth I would not throw good money after bad into America. Fourth, conflict with the Spanish hung menacingly over every European attempt to gain a foothold in North America.

While Roanoke struggled, England in 1588 won a spectacular naval victory over the Armada, a huge invasion fleet sent into the English Channel by Spain’s Philip II. This famous victory preserved England’s independence and confirmed its status as a major power in the Atlantic.



**Elizabeth I:  
The Armada Portrait**

1609

## Lake Champlain

For thousands of years before the seventeenth century, Lake Champlain had been central to the lives of Native Americans. The lake and its many tributaries abounded with fish and waterfowl as well as beaver, otter, and other mammals. The surrounding Champlain Valley's forests were rich in edible plants and home to deer, bear, and wild turkey. And its fertile soil supported Indian cultivation of corn, beans, and squash while its stone outcrops served as quarries for making tools. Arriving in 1609, the French colonizer, Samuel de Champlain (who named the lake for himself) described the valley as "a fine, fertile region," its waters as "very full of fish," and its land as having "many butternut trees and vines, and beautiful meadows with much game." Besides being a habitat, Lake Champlain was a high-

way over which Indian traders, diplomats, and warriors passed between the Northeast's two major river systems—the St. Lawrence and the Hudson. It was as a warrior that Champlain sailed on to the lake that summer day in 1609.

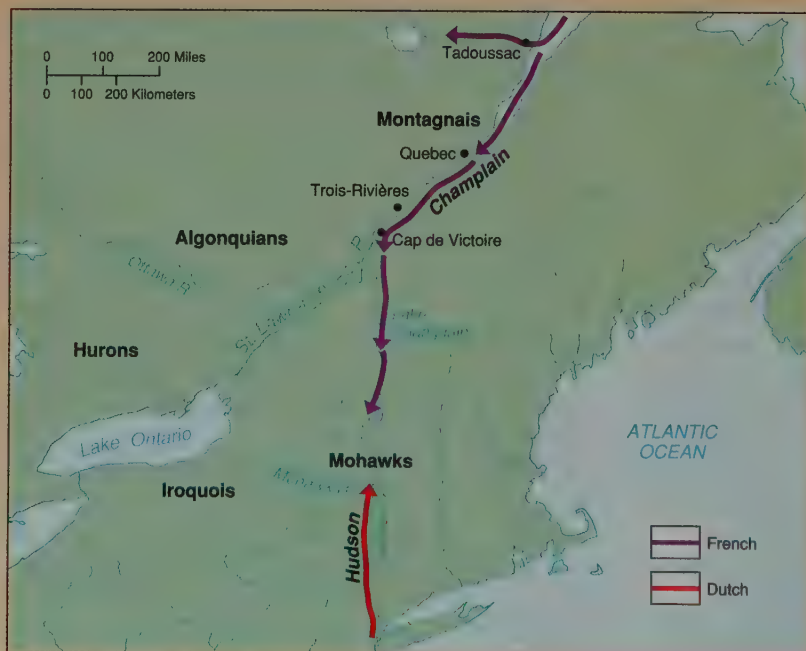
Champlain had arrived in Canada the year before and established France's first successful North American colony at Quebec on the St. Lawrence. The French government planted the colony in order to control the lucrative Canadian fur trade and to keep out English, Dutch, and independent French competitors. Having previously explored much of the Northeast and headed a short-lived French settlement at Acadia, Champlain was familiar with Indian politics and diplomacy in the region. Building on this understanding, he shrewdly allied with the Montagnais and Algonquians of the St. Lawrence

and the Hurons of the lower Great Lakes and agreed to help them defeat their enemies, the Mohawks of the Iroquois Confederacy, who had long sought direct access to European traders visiting the St. Lawrence. Champlain's new allies were equally shrewd in recognizing the advantage that French guns would give them against the usually dreaded Mohawks.

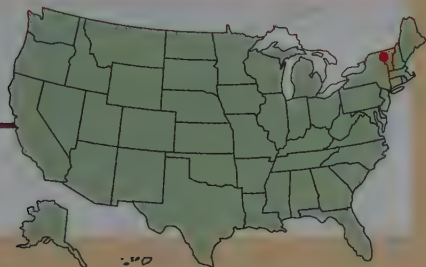
In mid-July Champlain and two other Frenchmen accompanied sixty Montagnais and Huron warriors to the Mohawk-controlled lake. In the days that followed, the Indians and French learned much about each other's methods of waging war. Champlain particularly admired the Indian leaders' sophisticated discussions of strategy, their thorough drilling of their men, and their smooth coordination of fighting, scouting, and provisioning operations. On the other hand, he scoffed at the Indians' belief that dreams would foretell the outcome of the battle and at an elaborate ceremony in which a religious leader (whom Champlain considered a fraud) attempted to determine whether the Indians "would come upon their enemies and kill many of them."

On the evening of July 29, the party encountered two hundred Mohawks at Point Ticonderoga near the lake's southern tip. Instead of taking up weapons (for the Indians rarely fought at night), the warriors on each side exchanged boasts and taunts, each side predicting that it would humiliate the other on the following day. All the while the French remained hidden. In the morning, Champlain's party went ashore, the main body moving directly toward the Mohawks and the rest taking cover behind nearby trees. As the main column neared its opponents, Champlain stepped ahead and confronted the Mohawks' three spectacularly attired war leaders.

## French and Dutch Expeditions in the Northeast, 1608–1609







I was thirty paces from the enemy, who as soon as they caught site of me halted and gazed at me and I at them. When I saw them make a move to draw their bows upon us, I took aim with my arquebus [*a kind of gun*] and shot straight at one of the three chiefs, and with this same shot two fell to the ground, and one of their companions was wounded and died a little later. . . . The Iroquois were much astonished that two men should have been killed so quickly, . . . As I was reloading my arquebus, one of my [French] companions fired a shot from within the woods, which astonished them again so much that, seeing their chiefs dead, they lost courage and took to flight, abandoning the field and their fort, and fleeing into the depths of the forest, whither I pursued them and laid low still more of them.

Thereafter the French and their allies pursued the fleeing Mohawks, killing about fifty and capturing about a dozen prisoners. A few of the pro-French Indians suffered minor arrow wounds.

What took place that day on the shore of Lake Champlain was nothing less than revolutionary. Although the Spanish had used firearms extensively in their conquests to the south, such weapons remained unknown to northeastern Indians except in a few coastal communities. The fact that Europeans—whose goods of glass and metal were already becoming highly prized by the region's Indians—also possessed such a powerful weapon made alliance with them all the more imperative for Native Americans. Just as the French were routing the Mohawks, Henry Hudson sailed up the river later named for him and traded with various Indians while claiming the land for the Dutch Republic. When Dutch traders returned the following year, some of their most eager customers were—not surprisingly—Mohawk Iroquois. There began an economic and diplomatic tie that would serve the Iroquois and Dutch as a counterweight to the power of the French and their native allies. Dutch traders later sold guns to the Iroquois, making them the most feared and the most heavily armed Indian force in North America. The French-Iroquois rivalry did not abate until a series of wars



Montagnais Indians

at the end of the century finally exhausted both sides. The battle of Lake Champlain marked the end of casual Indian-European encounters in the Northeast and the beginning of a deadly era of trade, diplomacy, and warfare.



(Above) Samuel de Champlain  
The explorer is considered the “father of New France”; (right) Battle of Lake Champlain



## *The Beginnings of English Colonization: Virginia*

Anglo-Spanish relations took a new turn after 1603, when Elizabeth died and her cousin, the king of Scotland, ascended the English throne as James I. The cautious and peace-loving king signed a truce with Spain in 1604. Seriously alarmed by Dutch naval victories, the Spanish considered England the lesser danger. The new Spanish king, Philip III, therefore conceded what his predecessors had always refused: a free hand to another power in part of the Americas. Spain renounced its claims to Virginia; England could now colonize unmolested.

The question now was: How would England's colonies be financed? Neither the English crown nor Parliament would agree to spend money on colonies, and Roanoke's failure had proved that private fortunes were inadequate to finance successful settlements. Only joint-stock companies—business corporations that would amass capital through sales of stock to the public—could raise funds for American settlement. Such stock offerings produced large sums, but with limited risk for each investor.

On April 10, 1606, James I granted a charter authorizing overlapping grants of land in Virginia to two separate joint-stock companies, one based in London and the other in Plymouth. The Virginia Company of Plymouth received a grant extending south from modern Maine to the Potomac River, and the Virginia Company of London's lands ran north from Cape Fear to the Hudson River. Both companies dispatched colonists in 1607.

The Virginia Company of Plymouth sent 120 men to Sagadahoc, at the mouth of the Kennebec River. Half left in 1608 after alienating the Abenaki Indians and enduring a hard Maine winter, and the rest went back to England a year later. Soon thereafter the company disbanded.

The Virginia Company of London barely avoided a similar failure. Its first expedition included many gentlemen who disdained work and expected riches to fall into their laps. They chose a site on the James River in May 1607 and named it Jamestown. Discipline quickly fell apart and, as at Roanoke, the colonists neglected to plant crops. When relief ships arrived in January 1608 with reinforcements, only 38 survivors remained out of 105 immigrants.

Short of workers who could farm, fish, hunt, and do carpentry, Virginia also lacked effective leadership. The

council's first president hoarded supplies, and its second was lazy and indecisive. In September 1608 the desperate councilors turned to a brash soldier of fortune, Captain John Smith.

Only twenty-eight years old and of yeoman origin, Smith had experience fighting Spaniards and Turks that prepared him well to assume control in Virginia. Organizing all but the sick in work gangs, he ensured sufficient food and housing for winter. Applying lessons learned in his soldiering days, he laid down rules for maintaining sanitation and hygiene to limit disease. Above all, he brought order through military discipline. During the winter of 1608–1609, Virginia lost just a dozen men out of two hundred.

Smith also became the colony's best diplomat. After local Native Americans captured him in late 1607, Smith displayed such courage that Powhatan, the leader of the nearby Powhatan Confederacy, arranged an elaborate reconciliation ceremony in which his daughter, Pocahontas, "saved" Smith's life during a mock execution. Smith maintained satisfactory relations with the Powhatan Confederacy in part through his personality, but he also employed calculated demonstrations of English military strength to mask the settlers' actual weakness.

John Smith prevented Virginia from disintegrating as Sagadahoc had. But when he returned to England in 1609 after being wounded in a gunpowder explosion, discipline again crumbled. Expecting the Indians to provide them with corn, the colonists had not laid away sufficient food for the winter. Consequently, relations with the Powhatans deteriorated. A survivor of the winter wrote,

So lamentable was our scarcity, that we were constrained to eat dogs, cats, rats, snakes, toadstools, horsehides, and what not; one man out of the misery endured, killing his wife powdered her up [with flour] to eat her, for which he was burned. Many besides fed on the corpses of dead men.

Of the five hundred residents at Jamestown in September 1609, about four hundred died by May 1610. But an influx of new recruits, coupled with the imposition of military rule, enabled Virginia to win the First Anglo-Powhatan War (1610–1614). The English population remained small, however, just 380 in 1616, and it had yet to produce anything of value for the stockholders.

Tobacco emerged as Virginia's economic salvation. John Rolfe, an Englishman who married Pocahontas after the war, spent several years perfecting a salable vari-

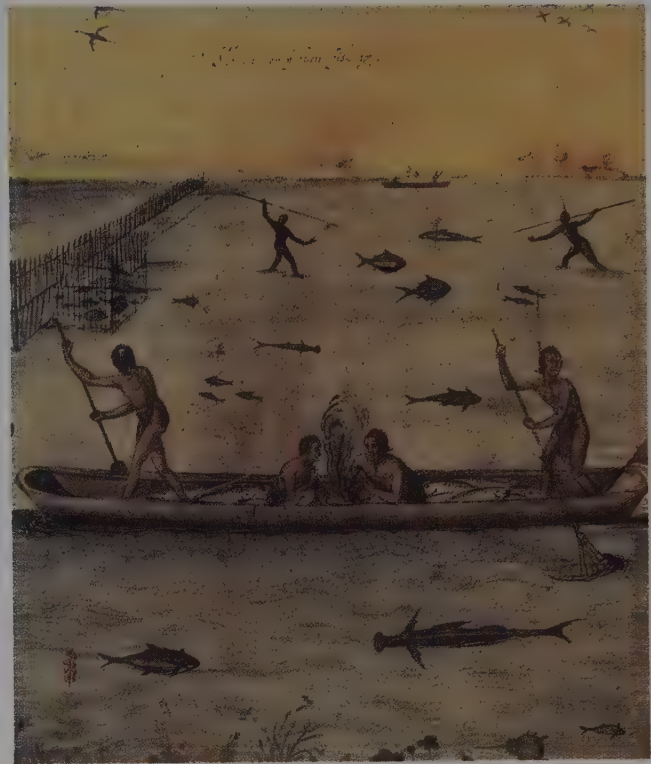


ety of tobacco and began planting it in Virginia. By 1619 the product commanded high prices, and that year Virginia exported large amounts of the crop. Thereafter the Virginia Company poured supplies and settlers into the colony.

To attract labor and capital, the company awarded fifty-acre grants ("headrights") to anyone paying his or her own passage or the transit of a laborer. By paying the passage of their indentured servants, some enterprising planters accumulated sizable tracts of land. Thousands of single young men and a few hundred women calculated that uncertainty in Virginia was preferable to continued unemployment and poverty in England. In return for their passage, the servants worked for a fixed term, usually four to seven years. The Virginia Company also abandoned military rule and provided for an assembly to be elected by the "inhabitants" (apparently meaning only the planters). Although the assembly's actions were subject to the company's veto, its establishment in 1619 did mark the beginnings of representative government in North America.

By 1622 Virginia faced three serious problems. First, local officials systematically defrauded the shareholders by embezzling treasury funds, overcharging for supplies, and using company laborers to work their own tobacco fields. They profited, but the company sank deep into debt. Second, the colony's population suffered from an exceptionally high death rate. The majority of fatalities stemmed from malnutrition owing to the poor diets of the servants, or from salt poisoning, typhus, or dysentery, contracted when the settlers drank the salty, polluted water from the lower James River. Most of the 3,500 immigrants entering Virginia from 1618 to 1622 died within three years. Finally, relations with the Powhatans steadily worsened after Pocahontas died in England in 1617, and Powhatan a year later. Leadership passed to Opechancanough, who at first sought to accommodate the English. But relentless expansion led to Indian discontent and to the rise of a powerful shaman, Nemattenew, who urged the Powhatans to resist the English to the death. After some settlers killed Nemattenew, the Indians launched a surprise attack in 1622 that killed 347 of the 1,240 colonists. With much of their livestock destroyed, spring planting prevented, and disease spreading through cramped fortresses, hundreds more colonists died in the ensuing months.

After the Virginia Company sent more men, Governor Francis Wyatt reorganized the settlers and took the offensive during the Second Anglo-Powhatan War



**Carolina Indians Fishing, by John White, 1585**

*Using canoes, weirs, nets, and spears, coastal Indians depended on fishing as an important source of their food.*

(1622–1632). Using tactics developed during the Irish war, Wyatt inflicted widespread starvation by destroying food supplies, conducted winter campaigns to drive Indians from their homes when they would suffer most, and fought (according to John Smith) as if he had "just cause to destroy them by all means possible." By 1625 the English had effectively won the war, and the Indians had lost their best chance of driving out the intruders.

The clash left the Virginia Company bankrupt and James I concerned over complaints against its officers. After receiving a report critical of the company's management, James revoked its charter in 1624 and Virginia became a royal colony. Only about five hundred colonists now lived in Virginia, including a handful of Africans who had been brought in since 1619.\* So the roots from which Virginia's Anglo-American and African-American peoples later grew were fragile indeed.

\* The emergence of Virginia's African-American population will be traced in Chapter 3.

## ***The Origins of New England: Plymouth Plantation***

Still another colonial venture was begun in the early seventeenth century by the English who settled New England. In 1614 the ever-enterprising John Smith, exploring its coast, gave New England its name. “Who,” he asked, “can but approve this most excellent place, both for health and fertility?” An admirer of Cortés, Smith planned to conquer its “goodly, strong, and well-proportioned [Indian] people” and establish an English colony there. But his hopes came to naught. As for the region’s native peoples, a terrible epidemic devastated the coastal tribes by about 90 percent in 1616–1618. Later visitors found the ground littered with the “bones and skulls” of the unburied dead, and acres of overgrown cornfields.

Against this tragic backdrop, in 1620 the Virginia Company of London gave a patent to some London merchants headed by Thomas Weston for a settlement. Weston sent over twenty-four families (a total of 102 people) in a small, leaky ship called the *Mayflower*. The colonists promised to send lumber, furs, and fish back to Weston in England for seven years, after which they would own the tract.

The expedition’s leaders—but only half its members—belonged to a small religious community from the town of Scrooby in northern England. The group was made up of Separatist Puritans who had with-

drawn from the Church of England and fled to the Netherlands to practice their religion freely. But fearing that their children were assimilating into Dutch culture, they decided to immigrate to America.

In November 1620 the *Mayflower* landed at Plymouth Bay, outside the bounds of Virginia. Knowing that they had no legal right to be there, the expedition’s leaders insisted that all the adult males in the group (including Non-Separatists) sign the Mayflower Compact before they landed. By this document they constituted themselves a “civil body politic”—that is, a civil government—under James I’s sovereignty and established the colony of Plymouth Plantation.

Weakened by their journey and unprepared for winter, half the Pilgrims, as they came to be known, died within four months of landing. Those still alive in the spring of 1621 owed much to the aid of two English-speaking Indians. One was Squanto, a local Patuxet Indian who had been taken to Spain as a slave some years earlier, escaped to England, and made himself useful to potential colonizers. Returning, he learned that most of the two thousand Patuxets had perished in the recent epidemic. The other friendly Indian, an Abenaki from Maine named Samoset, had experience trading with the English. To prevent the Pilgrims from stealing their food, the Indians taught the newcomers how to grow corn. The Pilgrims’ first harvest of 1621 was marked by a ceremony cementing the relationship, “at which time . . . we exercised our arms, many of the Indians coming amongst us, . . . some 90 men, whom for three days we entertained and feasted.” This ceremony was the basis for Thanksgiving, a holiday established in the nineteenth century.

Plymouth’s relations with the Native Americans worsened, however. The alliance that Squanto and Samoset had arranged between Plymouth and local Wampanoag Indians headed by Chief Massasoit united two weak parties. But with their firearms the colonists became the dominant partner, forcing the Indians to acknowledge English sovereignty. News of the Virginia massacre of 1622 hastened the colony’s militarization under the leadership of a professional soldier, Miles Standish, who threatened Plymouth’s Indian “allies” with its monopoly of firepower. For although Massasoit remained loyal, many other Indians were offended by the colonists’ conduct.

Relations with Native Americans also enabled Plymouth to become economically self-sufficient. After the colony turned from communal farming to individually owned plots, its more prosperous farmers pro-

### **Early Plymouth Colony**

*After barely surviving their first winter, the settlers ensured their future by building simple houses and using Indian techniques to grow corn.*





duced corn surpluses, which they traded to nonfarming Abenakis in Maine for furs. In 1627 Plymouth agreed with the Dutch to divide the fur and wampum trade in New England. Within a decade, the Plymouth colony had grown to several hundred people in the southeastern corner of present-day Massachusetts.

At first an almost insignificant group, the Pilgrims were only one of several small English bands that immigrated to New England in the 1620s. Their lasting importance was twofold. First, they would help inspire the later American vision of sturdy, self-reliant, God-fearing folk crossing the Atlantic to govern themselves freely. Second, they foreshadowed the methods that later generations of European Americans would use to gain mastery over Indians. In both respects, the Pilgrims were the vanguard of a massive, voluntary migration of Puritans to New England in the 1630s.

## CONCLUSION

The sixteenth century marked the emergence of a new "Atlantic world," linking Europe, Africa, and the Americas. Europe haltingly entered a new, "modern" era characterized by commercial capitalism, nation-states, and postmedieval Christianity. These new forces did not entirely displace economies based on subsistence and reciprocity, local communities rooted in centuries-old customs, and widespread beliefs in supernatural forces independent of the Christian God. Expansion and colonization strengthened the "modern" forces by providing new fields for investment and profit, and new foundations for national power. The overseas ventures also enabled European leaders and ideologues to portray Native Americans and Africans as "savages" whose cultures and customs "civilized" Europeans should avoid at all cost.

The Atlantic world brought few benefits to West Africans and Native Americans. Initial Portuguese incursions on West Africa's coast promised to expand the region's trade ties with Europe. But by century's end, Europe's overwhelming demand for slave labor was shaping trade, politics, and warfare throughout West Africa. Africa's notorious underdevelopment, which persists in our own time, had begun.

During the sixteenth century, indigenous peoples in Mexico, Peru, and elsewhere felt the terrible violence of Spanish conquest, suffering untold losses of population as well as the shattering of political, social, and religious institutions and practices. All the while, Indians in North America held would-be conquerors and coloniz-

ers at bay. But new colonizing efforts by British, French, Dutch, as well as Spanish at the dawn of the seventeenth century made clear that native North Americans now faced challenges as serious as those confronted earlier by peoples to the south.

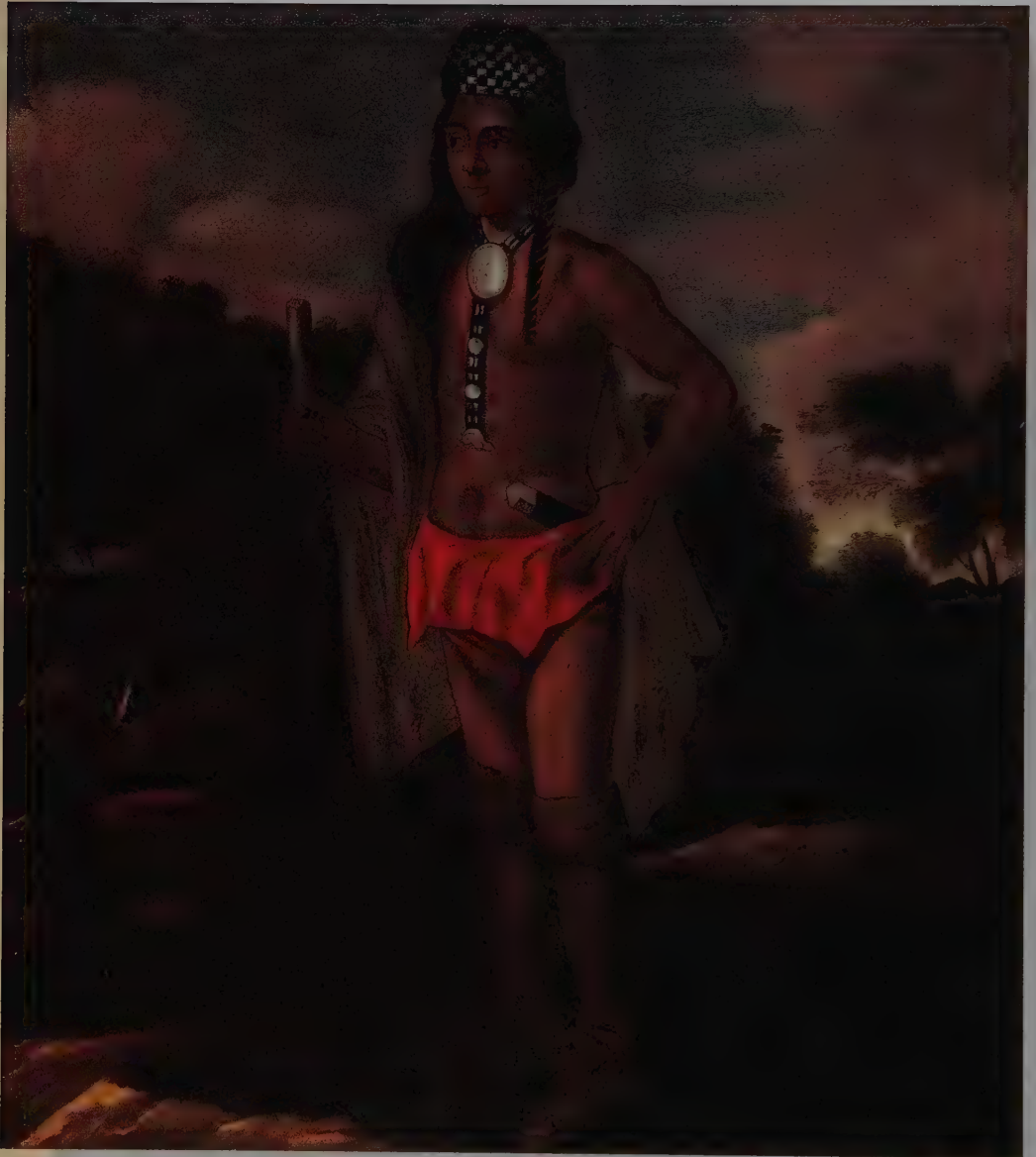
Nevertheless, Europe's presence north of the Caribbean and Mexico remained limited in 1625. In New Mexico and Florida, Spain advanced as far north as seemed worthwhile to protect Mexican and Caribbean conquests. Virginia's victory over the Indians there strengthened the English position in the Chesapeake, where tobacco had become the principal commercial crop. Here and in the fragile Plymouth colony, English settlers relied primarily on farming. New France and New Netherland existed mainly to trade in furs. To one degree or another, all these enterprises depended for their success or security on maintaining stable relations with at least some Native Americans. The transplantation of Europeans into North America was hardly a story of inevitable triumph.

## FOR FURTHER READING

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- D. W. Meinig, *The Shaping of America*, vol. I: Atlantic America, 1492–1800 (1986). A geographer's engrossing study of Europeans' encounter with North America and the rise of colonial societies.
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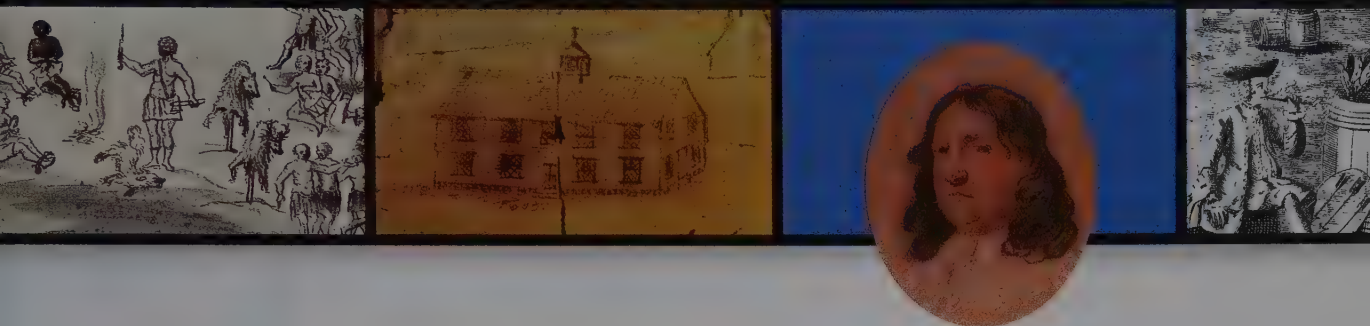
# 3

## Expansion and Diversity: The Rise of Colonial America



**Ninigret, Eastern Niantic Sachem**  
*Artist Unknown, c. 1684*





**O**n the West Indian island of Barbados in 1692, a widowed Englishwoman named Sarah Horbin counted up her relatives to see who might deserve bequests of property in case her only son—a sailor being held for ransom in a North African prison—died. Through her kinsman John Seabury of Barbados, she had kept in contact with a dozen Seabury cousins in New England. She had also remained in touch with several Virginia relatives in the Empereur family and with a kinsman of her husband's, Andrew Rouse, who lived in Carolina.

Sarah Horbin and her far-flung clan were part of a great migration of English, Dutch, French, Spanish, and other European women and men who built new communities in North America and the Caribbean during the seventeenth century. By 1700 there were more than 250,000 people of European birth or parentage, most of them English, within the modern-day United States. The vast exodus provided North America with its first large wave of immigrant settlers.

In 1665 another newly widowed immigrant, Mary Johnson of Somerset County, Maryland, conducted a similar survey of her kin. Her two sons, living nearby, each had a wife and two children. Johnson's other relatives were undoubtedly as widely scattered as Horbin's, but unlike Horbin, she had no idea where they were. For Mary Johnson had arrived in Virginia thirty years earlier not as a free person but as a slave. Although Mary's origins are unknown, her husband Anthony had previously been called Antonio, indicating that he had been enslaved first by the Portuguese. Soon after their marriage in 1625, the Johnsons somehow gained their freedom (all pertinent records have been lost), as did a few dozen other slaves in Virginia's early decades. Thereafter they managed not only to survive as free persons but to own some land and even a few slaves. Nevertheless they faced not only the uncertainties confronting all small tobacco planters in the seventeenth-century Chesapeake region, but the even

more daunting legal restrictions based on race.

Most of the Johnsons' fellow Africans were less fortunate. Whereas Europeans might at least hope to realize economic opportunity or religious freedom, most Africans and their progeny would be the property of others for as long as they lived. Even the Johnsons' grandchildren disappear from the records after the turn of the eighteenth century, most likely the victims of legislation forcing most free blacks into slavery.

The vast majority of the 300,000 Africans taken to the Caribbean and North America during the seventeenth century went to the sugar plantations of Sarah Horbin's neighbors in Barbados and elsewhere in the West Indies; a small but distinct minority, to the mainland plantation colonies of the Southeast; and a scattered few to other regions.

Patterns of European and African immigration contributed significantly to the emergence of distinct regions in colonial North America. The preponderance of immigrants from England ensured that nation's domination of North America's eastern coast as well as the Caribbean, forcing the Dutch out of North America altogether and leaving France and Spain with lands less attractive to colonists. Within England's mainland colonies, four distinct regions emerged: New England, the Chesapeake, Carolina, and the middle colonies. Several factors distinguished these regions from one another, including their physical environments, the motives of white immigrants, and the concentrations of enslaved Africans.

The vast migrations of Europeans and Africans were possible only because of yet another demographic upheaval, the depopulation and uprooting of Native Americans. Having begun in the sixteenth century, the process continued in the seventeenth, primarily as a result of epidemic diseases but also because of warfare and other factors arising from the European invasion of Indian lands. Although many native populations partly recovered, it is likely that about 1 million In-

dians died as a result of contact with Europeans by 1700. Sarah Horbin, Mary Johnson, and their various kin settled not in wildernesses but in lands long inhabited and worked by Native Americans.

Although dominated by European immigrants, the wealth and vitality of the North American colonies at the end of the seventeenth century resulted from the unequal encounter of peoples from three continents.

This chapter will focus on four major questions:

- ◆ How and why did the four regions of English North America develop in such different ways during the seventeenth century?
- ◆ Why did indentured servitude give way to racial slavery in England's plantation colonies? Why were both these institutions more limited in the nonplantation colonies?
- ◆ How would you characterize and compare Indian–European relations in the various colonial regions of North America during the seventeenth century? How do you explain the similarities and differences you find?
- ◆ What factors contributed most significantly to England's supremacy among European powers colonizing North America during the seventeenth century?

## The New England Way

In the late 1620s, as England's religious and political environment grew threatening and the economy worsened, many Puritans became interested in colonizing New England. Separatist Puritans (the "Pilgrims") had established Plymouth in 1620, and a few hundred others had drifted into the region over the next decade. But not until 1630 did large-scale migration begin (see map on page 50). Building communities based on religious ideals, this larger, more formidable group of Puritans endeavored to build America's first utopian, or ideal, society.

### *A City upon a Hill*

In 1628 several Puritan merchants obtained a charter to settle north of Plymouth colony between the Charles and Merrimack Rivers. Organizing as the Massachusetts Bay Company, they took advantage of a gap in their

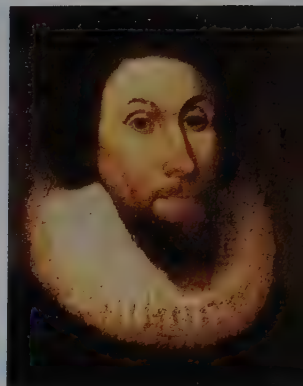
charter and in 1629 moved the seat of their colony's government to New England. Like Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay would be self-governed rather than controlled from England by stockholders, proprietors, or the crown.

After four hundred Puritans arrived at Salem, Massachusetts, in 1629, the company in 1630 sent out its "great fleet" of eleven ships and seven hundred passengers under Governor John Winthrop. In midvoyage Winthrop delivered a lay sermon titled "A Model of Christian Charity," describing the colony as a utopian alternative to old England.

Winthrop boldly announced that "we shall be as a city upon a hill, the eyes of all people are upon us." The settlers would build a godly community whose example would shame England into repenting. The English government would then truly reform the church, and a revival of piety would create a nation of saints.

Winthrop denounced the economic jealousy that bred class hatred. God intended that "in all times some must be rich and some poor," he explained. The rich had an obligation to show charity and mercy; those less wealthy should live out their faith in God's will by demonstrating patience and fortitude. God expected the state to keep the greedy among the rich from exploiting the needy and to prevent the lazy among the poor from burdening their fellow citizens. In outlining a divine plan in which all people, rich and poor, depended on one another, Winthrop expressed a conservative European's understanding of social reciprocity (see Chapter 2) and voiced the Puritans' deep dismay with the economic forces battering—and changing—English society.

Winthrop's address exemplified the main difference between New England's settlement and English colonization elsewhere. Other colonists would display the acquisitive impulses transforming England, but in New England, as one minister put it, "Religion and



**John Winthrop**

*During the passage to America, Winthrop urged his shipmates to build a society about which "men shall say of succeeding plantations: 'The Lord make it like that of New England.'"*



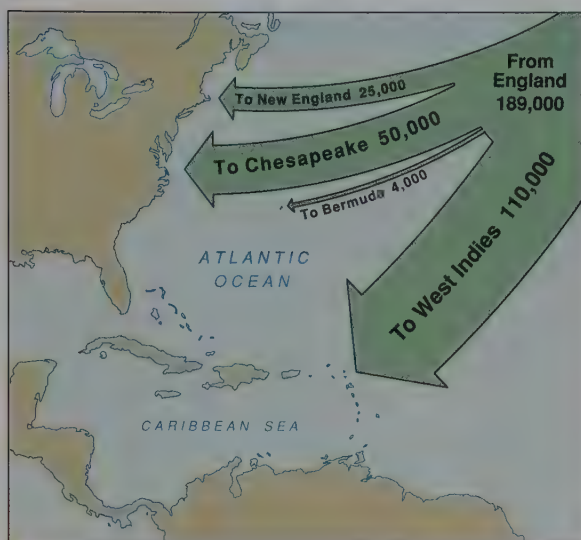
## CHRONOLOGY

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <p><b>1627</b> English establish Barbados.</p> <p><b>1629</b> Massachusetts Bay colony founded.</p> <p><b>1630</b> John Winthrop, "A Model of Christian Charity."</p> <p><b>1633</b> First English settlements in Connecticut.</p> <p><b>1634</b> Cecilius Calvert (Lord Baltimore) founds proprietary colony of Maryland.</p> <p><b>1636</b> Roger Williams founds Providence, Rhode Island. Harvard College established.</p> <p><b>1637</b> Anne Hutchinson banished from Massachusetts Bay. Pequot War in Connecticut.</p> <p><b>1638</b> New Sweden established.</p> <p><b>1639</b> Connecticut formally established.</p> <p><b>1640s</b> Large-scale slave-labor system takes hold in the West Indies.</p> <p><b>1642–1648</b> English Civil War.</p> <p><b>1644–1646</b> Third Anglo-Powhatan War in Virginia.</p> | <p><b>1649</b> Maryland's Act for Religious Toleration. King Charles I beheaded. Five Iroquois Nations disperse Hurons.</p> <p><b>1655</b> New Netherland annexes New Sweden.</p> <p><b>1660</b> Charles II becomes king of England.</p> <p><b>1661</b> Maryland defines slavery as a lifelong, inheritable racial status.</p> <p><b>1662</b> Half-Way Covenant drafted.</p> <p><b>1663</b> Carolina founded as English colony. New France made a royal colony.</p> <p><b>1664</b> English conquer New Netherland; rename it New York. New Jersey established.</p> <p><b>1670</b> Settlement of southern Carolina begins. Virginia defines slavery as a lifelong, inheritable racial status.</p> <p><b>1672</b> Louis Jolliet and Jacques Marquette explore the Mississippi River.</p> <p><b>1675–1676</b> King Philip's War in New England.</p> | <p><b>1676</b> Bacon's Rebellion in Virginia.</p> <p><b>1680–1692</b> Pueblo revolt in New Mexico.</p> <p><b>1681</b> William Penn founds Pennsylvania.</p> <p><b>1682</b> La Salle descends the Mississippi River to the Gulf of Mexico and claims the Mississippi basin for France.</p> <p><b>1690s</b> Collapse of the Royal African Company's monopoly on selling slaves to the English colonies; large shipments of Africans begin reaching the Chesapeake.</p> <p><b>1691</b> Spain establishes province of Texas.</p> <p><b>1692–1693</b> Salem witchcraft trials.</p> <p><b>1698</b> French begin settlements near the mouth of the Mississippi River.</p> <p><b>1702</b> New Jersey made a royal colony.</p> <p><b>1704</b> Delaware established.</p> <p><b>1711–1713</b> Tuscarora War in Carolina.</p> <p><b>1715–1716</b> Yamasee War in Carolina.</p> |
|--|--|--|

profit [would] jump together." While hoping for prosperity, Puritans believed there were limits to legitimate commercial behavior. They thought that moral self-restraint—or if need be, the government—should prevent merchants from taking advantage of shortages to squeeze out "excessive" profits. Above all, they hoped to turn religious idealism into a renewed sense of community. "It is a great thing," wrote an early New Englander, "to be a foundation stone in such a spiritual

building." Massachusetts Bay would not be an extension of England but an alternative to it.

Winthrop and the great fleet arrived in June 1630 at Boston harbor, and by fall six towns had sprung up nearby. During the unusually severe first winter, 30 percent of Winthrop's party died, and another 10 percent went home in the spring. By mid-1631, however, thirteen hundred new settlers had landed, and more were on the way. The worst was over. The colony would



### English Migration, 1610–1660

*During the first phase of English transatlantic migration, the West Indies attracted more than twice as many colonists as went to the Chesapeake, and over four times as many as settled in New England.*

never suffer another starving time. In contrast to early Virginia, Massachusetts Bay attracted pious, disciplined men and women of modest means who established the colony on a firm basis within a year.

### The Pequot War

Also in contrast to the settlement of Virginia, the colonization of New England began with little sustained resistance from Native Americans, whose numbers were drastically reduced by the ravages of disease. After one epidemic killed about 90 percent of New England's coastal Indians between 1616 and 1618 (see Chapter 2), a second inflicted comparable casualties on Indians throughout the Northeast in 1633–1634. Having dwindled from twenty thousand in 1600 to a few dozen survivors by the mid-1630s, the Massachusetts Indians were pressed to sell most of their land to the English. During the 1640s Massachusetts Bay passed laws prohibiting them from practicing their own religion and encouraging missionaries to convert them to Christianity. Thereafter they moved into “praying towns” like Natick, a reservation established by the colony. In the praying towns Puritan missionary John Eliot hoped to teach the Native Americans Christianity and English ways.

The expansion of English settlement farther inland, however, aroused Indian resistance. As settlers moved into the Connecticut River Valley, beginning in 1633, friction developed with the Pequots, who controlled the trade in furs and wampum with New Netherland. After tensions escalated into violence, the English in 1637 took decisive action. Having gained the support of the Mohegan and Narragansett Indians, they waged a ruthless campaign, using tactics similar to those devised by the English to break Irish resistance during the 1570s (see Chapter 2). In a predawn attack English troops surrounded and set fire to a Pequot village at Mystic, Connecticut, and then cut down all who tried to escape. Several hundred Pequots, mostly women and children, were killed. Although their Narragansett allies protested that “it is too furious, and slays too many men,” the Puritans found in the grisly massacre a cause for celebration. Wrote Plymouth's Governor William Bradford,

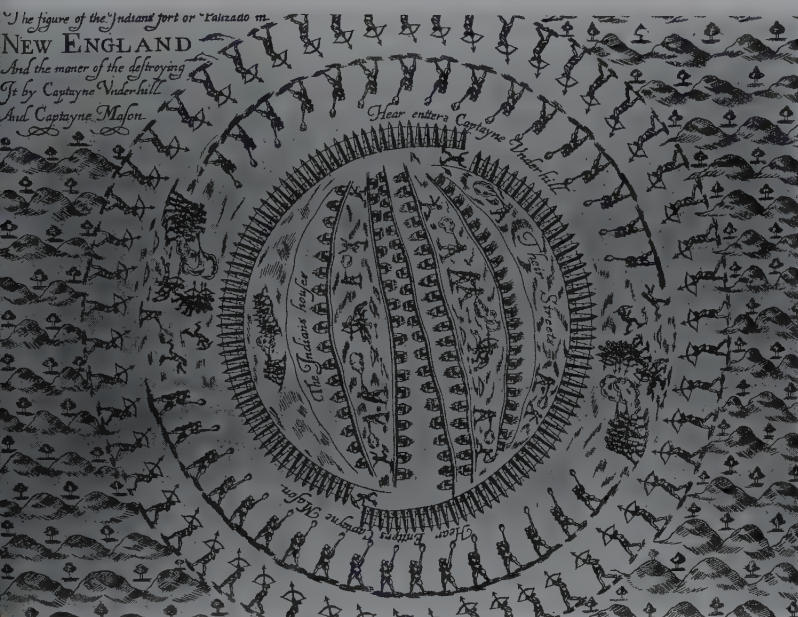
It was a fearful sight to see them [the Pequots] thus frying in the fire and the streams of blood quenching the same, and horrible was the stink and scent thereof; but the victory seemed a sweet sacrifice, and they [the English] gave the praise to God, who had wrought so wonderfully for them, thus to enclose their enemies in their hands and give them so speedy a victory over so proud and insulting an enemy.

By late 1637 Pequot resistance was crushed, with surviving Pequots being taken by pro-English Indians as captives or by the English as slaves. English establishment of the new colonies of Connecticut (1639) and New Haven (1643) could now proceed unimpeded. (New Haven was absorbed by Connecticut in 1662.)

### The Development of a Puritan Orthodoxy

Although most New England Puritans considered themselves spiritual members of the Church of England, they created a system of self-governing congregations (congregationalism) that completely ignored the authority of Anglican bishops. (The Separatist Puritans of Plymouth and Rhode Island explicitly disavowed Anglican authority over their congregations.) Control of each congregation lay squarely in the hands of the male saints (church members). By majority vote these men chose their minister, elected a board of “elders” to handle finances, decided who else deserved recognition as saints, and otherwise ran the church. In contrast, in a typical English parish, a powerful gentry family would





### Attack on Mystic Fort, Pequot War

This print, published in an English participant's account of the war, shows English troops, backed by allied Indians, surrounding the Pequot village while soldiers prepare to burn it.

select a new pastor (subject to a bishop's formal approval), and all other important decisions would be made by the parish council, or vestry, which was virtually always composed of wealthy landlords. New England congregationalism thus allowed for broader-based control of the church than did Anglicanism.

While saints controlled a congregation's internal affairs, the colonies obliged all adults to attend services and pay set rates (or tithes) to support their local churches. New England thus had a state-sponsored, or "established," church, whose relationship to civil government was symbolized by the fact that a single building—called a meetinghouse rather than a church—was used for both religious services and town business.

This "New England Way" also diverged from English practices by setting higher standards for identifying the elect. English Puritans usually accepted as saints those who could correctly profess the faith, had repented their sins, and lived free of scandal. Massachusetts Puritans, however, insisted that candidates for membership provide a soul-baring "relation," or account, of their conversion before the congregation.

English Puritans strongly criticized the conversion relation as an unnecessary barrier to membership that would intimidate humble saints who were hesitant to reveal their spiritual travails in public. Many early Puri-

tans shared the reluctance of Jonathan Fairbanks, who refused to give a public profession of grace before the church in Dedham, Massachusetts, for several years, until the faithful persuaded him with many "loving conferences." The conversion relation would emerge as the New England Way's most vulnerable point and a major cause of its eventual demise.

New Englanders, like most European Protestants, could scarcely imagine conversion without literacy. Young people read the Bible to feel the quickening of God's grace, and saints often recorded their lapses and spiritual insights in diaries. In 1647 Massachusetts Bay ordered every town of fifty or more households to appoint one teacher to whom all children could come for instruction, and every town of at least one hundred households to maintain a grammar school. This and similar laws in other Puritan colonies represented New



### Sketches of an Early Plymouth Meetinghouse

One early New Englander boasted that his community's meetinghouse had been erected "by our own vote, framed by our own hammers and saws, and by our own hands set in the convenientest place for us all."

England's first step toward public education. But none of these laws required school attendance, and boys were more likely to be taught reading and especially writing than were girls.

However diligent laypeople might be in reading the Bible and indoctrinating their children, clergymen had responsibility for leading saints to repentance and stimulating piety. The minister's role was to stir his parishioners' faith with direct, logical, and moving sermons that spoke to all saints, not just to a well-educated elite. The Puritans' preference for this "plain style" of preaching did not contradict their desire for a highly educated clergy, for ministers also had to uphold orthodoxy and be alert for signs of heresy.

To produce learned ministers, Massachusetts founded Harvard College in 1636. From 1642 to 1671, the college produced 201 graduates, including 111 ministers. Harvard's alumni made New England the only part of England's overseas empire to possess a college-educated elite during the seventeenth century, and they ensured that the New England Way would not falter for lack of properly trained clergy.

### *Dissenting Puritans*

The values articulated by Winthrop and other New England leaders reinforced social order and religious conformity. Without order and conformity, the leaders feared, divisiveness among Puritans over questions such as church-state relations, church membership, economic individualism, and the role of women would lead to a splintering of the colonists and their failure in the eyes of God. Despite the leaders' efforts, some Puritans entertained quite radical ideas and insisted on expressing them.

Puritans agreed that the church must be free of state control, and they opposed theocracy (government run by clergy). But most believed that a holy commonwealth required cooperation between church and state. Roger Williams, who arrived in 1631, took a different stance. He argued that civil government should remain absolutely uninvolved with religious matters, whether blasphemy (cursing God), failure to pay tithes, refusal to attend worship, or swearing oaths on the Bible in court. Williams also opposed any kind of compulsory church service or government interference with private religious beliefs, not because all religions deserved equal respect but because the state (a creation of sinful human beings) would corrupt the church.

Believing that the very purpose of founding Massachusetts Bay was to protect true religion and prevent heresy, the political authorities declared Williams's opinions subversive and banished him in 1635. Williams moved south to a place that he called Providence, which he purchased from the Narragansett Indians. At Williams's invitation, a steady stream of dissenters drifted to the group of settlements near Providence on Narragansett Bay, which in 1647 joined to form Rhode Island colony. (Orthodox Puritans scorned the place as "Rogues Island.") True to Williams's ideals, Rhode Island was the only New England colony to practice religious toleration. Growing slowly, the colony's four towns had eight hundred settlers by 1650.

A second major challenge to the New England Way came from Anne Hutchinson, whom Winthrop described as "a woman of haughty and fierce carriage, of a nimble wit and active spirit." The controversy surrounding Hutchinson was especially ironic because it centered on her repudiation of the Catholic idea that one's "good works" in this life were the key to salvation thereafter (see Chapter 2). Supposedly, all Puritans agreed that "good works" were a false road to heaven, instead following John Calvin in maintaining that God had predetermined who would and would not be saved. But Hutchinson argued that most Puritan ministers were hypocritical on the question of salvation. By insisting that they could scrutinize a person's outward behavior for "signs" of salvation, especially when that person was relating his or her conversion experience, the clergymen discarded God's judgment in favor of their own. Such ministers, she went on to say, impeded rather than aided their parishioners' conversions. Only by looking inward and by ignoring such false prophets could individuals hope to find salvation. Hutchinson eventually alleged that all the colony's ministers except two had not been saved and so lacked authority over saints like herself.

By casting doubt on the clergy's spiritual state, Hutchinson undermined its authority over laypersons. Critics charged that her beliefs would delude individuals into imagining that they were accountable to no one but themselves. Winthrop branded her followers Antinomians, meaning those opposed to the rule of law. Hutchinson bore the additional liability of being a woman who stepped outside her prescribed role. As one of her accusers put it, "You have stepped out of your place; you [would] have rather been a husband



than a wife, a preacher than a hearer; and a magistrate than a subject.”

By 1636 Massachusetts Bay split into two camps. Hutchinson’s supporters included Boston merchants (like her husband) who disliked the government’s economic restrictions on their business; young men chafing against the rigid control of church elders; and women, protesting their second-class status in church affairs. In 1636 the Antinomians were strong enough to have their candidate elected governor, but they suffered defeat with Winthrop’s return to office in 1637.

The victorious Winthrop brought Hutchinson to trial for heresy before the Massachusetts Bay legislature (the General Court), whose members peppered her with questions. Hutchinson’s knowledge of Scripture was so superior to that of her interrogators, however, that she would have been acquitted had she not claimed to have been converted through a direct revelation from God. Like virtually all Christians, orthodox Puritans believed that God had ceased to make known matters of faith by personal revelation since New Testament times. Thus Hutchinson’s own words were sufficient to condemn her.

The General Court banished the leading Antinomians from the colony, and some of the others voluntarily followed them to Rhode Island, New Hampshire, or back to England. The largest group, led by Hutchinson, settled in Rhode Island.

Antinomianism’s defeat was followed by new restrictions on women’s independence and on equality within those Puritan congregations that had previously acted more evenhandedly on matters of gender. Increasingly, women were prohibited from assuming the kind of public religious roles claimed by Hutchinson, and were even required to relate their conversion experiences in private to their ministers rather than publicly before their congregations.

The most fundamental threat to Winthrop’s city upon a hill was that the people would abandon the ideal of a close-knit community to pursue self-interest. Although most Puritans welcomed the chance to found villages dedicated to stability, self-discipline, and a sense of mutual obligation, a large minority had come to America to find prosperity and social mobility. The most visibly ambitious colonists were merchants, whose activities fueled New England’s economy but whose way of life challenged its ideals.

Merchants fit uneasily into a religious utopia that idealized social reciprocity and equated financial

shrewdness with greed. They protested when government leaders tried to regulate prices so that consumers would not suffer from the chronic shortage of manufactured goods that afflicted New England.

In 1635, when the Massachusetts General Court forbade the sale of any item above 5 percent of its cost, Robert Keayne of Boston and other merchants objected. These men argued that they had to sell some goods at higher rates in order to offset their losses from other sales, shipwrecked cargoes, and inflation. In 1639, after selling nails at 25 percent to 33 percent above cost, Keayne was fined heavily in court and was forced to make a humiliating apology before his congregation.

Controversies like the one involving Keayne were part of a struggle for New England’s soul. At stake was the Puritans’ ability and desire to insulate their city upon a hill from a market economy that, they feared, would strangle the spirit of community within a harsh new world of frantic competition.

### *Power to the Saints*

To preserve the New England Way, the Puritans evolved political and religious institutions with far more popular participation than those in England. Unlike the Virginia Company of London, the Massachusetts Bay Company established its headquarters in America (see above). Massachusetts did not require voters or officeholders to own property but bestowed full citizenship on every adult male accepted as a saint. By 1641 about 55 percent of the colony’s 2,300 men could vote. By contrast, English property requirements allowed fewer than 30 percent of adult males to vote.

In 1634, after public protest that the governor and council held too much power, each town gained the option of sending two delegates to the General Court. In 1644 the General Court became a bicameral (two-chamber) lawmaking body when the towns’ deputies separated from the Governor’s Council to form the House of Representatives.

England’s basic unit of local government was the county court. Its justices of the peace not only decided legal cases but also performed administrative tasks and assessed taxes. Gaining office by royal appointment, English justices were always members of the gentry selected because of their wealth and political connections. By contrast, New England’s county courts functioned primarily as courts of law, and the vital unit of



### Land Divisions in Sudbury, Massachusetts, 1639–1656

*Like other first-generation settlers, John Goodnow lived on a small house lot near the meetinghouse. He grazed his livestock on “common” fields owned by the town and grew crops in five fields at varying distances from his house.* (Source: Sumner Chilton Powell, *Puritan Village: The Formation of a New England Town* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1963). Reprinted by permission.)

local administration was the town meeting. Town meetings decentralized authority over political and economic decisions to a degree unknown in either England or its other colonies.

New England legislatures established a town by awarding a grant of land to several dozen heads of families. These men then laid out the settlement, organized its church, distributed land among themselves, set local tax rates, and made local laws. Each town determined its own qualifications for voting and holding office in the town meeting, although custom dictated that all male taxpayers (including nonsaints) be allowed to participate. The meeting could exclude anyone from settling in town, and it could grant the right of sharing in any future land distributions to newcomers, whose children would inherit this privilege.

### Community Life

The local economy and environment left their stamp on New England towns. Of these communities the seaports often seemed least tight-knit because of their transient population, whereas most other towns resembled traditional English villages.

A town's founders usually granted each family a one-acre house lot (just enough for a vegetable garden)

within a half-mile of the meetinghouse. They also gave each household strips of land or small fields farther out for its crops and livestock. Often an individual owned several parcels of land in different locations and had the right to graze a few extra animals on the town “commons.”

Few aspects of early New England life are more revealing than the first generation's attempt in many, but not all, towns to keep settlement tightly clustered by granting families no more land than they needed to support themselves. Dedham's forty-six founders, for example, received 128,000 acres from Massachusetts Bay in 1636 yet gave themselves just 3,000 acres by 1656, or about 65 acres per family. The rest remained in trust for future generations.

With families clustered within a mile of one another, New England towns' physical settings were conducive to traditional reciprocity. They also fostered an atmosphere of mutual watchfulness that Puritans hoped would promote godly order. For the enforcement of such order, they relied on the women of each town as well as male magistrates.

Although women's public roles had been sharply curtailed following the Antinomian crisis, women—especially those who were church members—continued to be a social force in their communities. With their



husbands and older sons usually attending the family's scattered fields, women remained at home in the tightly clustered neighborhoods at the center of each town. Neighboring women exchanged not only goods—say, a pound of butter for a section of spun wool—but advice and news of other neighbors as well. They also gathered at the bedside when one of them gave birth, a setting that was entirely closed to men. In these settings, women confided in one another, creating a “community of women” within each town that contributed to the enforcement of morals and the protection of the poor and vulnerable. In 1663 Mary Rolfe of Newbury, Massachusetts, was being sexually harassed by a high-ranking gentleman while her fisherman husband was at sea. Rolfe confided to her mother who in turn consulted with a neighboring woman of influence before filing formal charges. A jury found the gentleman guilty of attempted adultery. When a gentlewoman, Patience Dennison, charged her maidservant with stealing food and clothing for more than a year and giving them to a poor young wife, a fourth woman testified that the provisions had kept the young wife's family from perishing. And the servant herself testified that her mistress was stingy, giving Dennison a reputation she never lived down.

### ***Puritan Families***

To Puritans, society's foundation rested not on the individual but on the “little commonwealth”—the nuclear family at the heart of every household. “*Well ordered families,*” declared minister Cotton Mather in 1699, “naturally produce a *Good Order* in other *Societies.*” In a proper Puritan family, the wife, children, and servants dutifully obeyed the household's male head. According to John Winthrop, a “true wife” thought of herself “in subjection to her husband's authority.”

New Englanders defined matrimony as a contract subject to state regulation rather than a religious sacrament and so were married by justices of the peace instead of ministers. As a civil institution, a marriage could be dissolved by the courts in cases of desertion, bigamy, adultery, or physical cruelty. By permitting divorce, Puritans diverged radically from practices in England, where Anglican authorities rarely annulled marriages and civil divorces required a special act of Parliament. Still, New Englanders saw divorce as a remedy fit only for extremely wronged spouses, such as the Plymouth woman who discovered that her husband was also married to women in Boston, Barbados, and

England. Massachusetts courts allowed just twenty-seven divorces from 1639 to 1692.

Because Puritans believed that healthy families were crucial to the community's welfare, they intervened whenever they discovered truly serious problems in a household. The courts disciplined unruly youngsters, disobedient servants, disrespectful wives, and violent or irresponsible husbands whose behavior seemed dangerous or unusually disruptive to a family. Churches also censured, and sometimes expelled, spouses who did not maintain domestic tranquillity. Negligent parents, one minister declared, “not only wrong each other, but they provoke God by breaking his law.”

New England wives enjoyed significant legal protections against spousal violence and nonsupport and also had more freedom than their English counterparts to escape a failed marriage. But they also suffered the same legal disabilities as all Englishwomen. An English wife had no property rights independently of her husband unless he consented to a special prenuptial agreement giving her control over any property that she already owned. Only if a husband had no other heirs or wrote a will awarding his widow full control over their possessions could she claim rights over household property, although the law reserved lifetime use of a third of the estate for her support.

In contrast to England, New England benefited from a remarkably benign disease environment. Al-



**Mary Hollingsworth  
Embroidered Sampler**

*Mary women found in embroidery a creative outlet that was compatible with their domestic duties.*

though settlements were compact, minimal travel occurred between towns, especially in the winter, when people were most susceptible to infection. Furthermore, easy access to land allowed most families an adequate diet, which improved resistance to disease and lowered death rates associated with childbirth.

Consequently, New Englanders lived longer and raised larger families than almost any society in the world in the seventeenth century. Life expectancy for men reached 65, and women lived nearly that long. More than 80 percent of all infants survived long enough to get married. The 58 men and women who founded Andover, Massachusetts, for example, had 247 children; by the fourth generation, the families of their descendants numbered 2,000 (including spouses who married in from other families). Despite the relatively small size and short duration of the Puritan exodus to New England (just 20,000 immigrants landed from 1630 to 1642, after which few newcomers arrived), the fact that most settlers came as members of family groups soon resulted in a population evenly divided between males and females. This balance permitted rapid population growth without heavy immigration.

Most immigrants had little or no cash; instead they relied on the labor of their large, healthy families to sustain them and secure their futures. Male heads of households managed the family's scattered crops and livestock, conducted most of its business transactions, and represented it in town government. Their wives bore, nursed, and reared their children. The women also had charge of most labor in the house, barn, and garden, including the making of most food and clothing from raw materials. In addition, they contributed to their communities by assisting at childbirths and aiding the poor and vulnerable, especially women living alone.

More than in England and the other colonies, the sons of New England's founding generation depended on their parents to provide them with acreage for a farm. With eventual land ownership guaranteed and few other opportunities available, sons delayed marriage and worked in their fathers' fields until finally receiving their own land. Because the average family raised three or four boys to adulthood, parents could depend on thirty to forty years of work if their sons delayed marriage beyond age twenty-five.

While daughters performed equally vital labor, their future lay with another family—the one into which they would marry. Being young, with many childbearing years ahead of them, enhanced their value

to that family. Thus first-generation women, on average, were only twenty-one when they married.

Families with more sons and daughters enjoyed a labor surplus that allowed them to send their children to work as apprentices or hired hands for others. However, this system of family labor was inefficient for two reasons. First, the available supply of labor could not expand in times of great demand. Second, parents were reluctant to force their own children to work as hard as strangers. Nevertheless, family labor was the only system that most New Englanders could afford.

Saddled with the burdens of a short growing season, rocky soil salted with gravel, and a system of land distribution in which farmers cultivated widely scattered strips, the colonists managed to feed large families and keep ahead of their debts, but few became wealthy from farming. Seeking greater fortunes than agriculture offered, some seventeenth-century New Englanders turned lumbering, fishing, fur trading, shipbuilding, and rum distilling into major industries. As its economy became more diversified, New England prospered. But in the process, its inhabitants grew more worldly, only to discover that fewer and fewer of their children were emerging as saints.

### *The Demise of the Puritan Errand*

As New Englanders struggled to make a living and create a utopia, England fell into chaos. Charles I's efforts to impose taxes without Parliament's consent sparked a civil war in 1642. Alienated by years of religious harassment, Puritans gained control of the revolt, beheaded Charles in 1649, and eventually replaced the king with "Lord High Protector" Oliver Cromwell. After Cromwell's death, however, a provisional English government "restored" the Stuarts and in 1660 crowned Charles II king.

The Restoration left American Puritans without a mission. A generation of New England ministers had inspired their congregations to hope that their example would shame England into establishing a truly reformed church. However, having conquered a wilderness and built their city upon a hill, New Englanders discovered after 1660 that the eyes of the world were no longer fixed on them.

Simultaneously with the Restoration, an internal crisis gripped the New England Way. The turmoil stemmed from the failure of the founding generation's children to declare themselves saints. The first genera-



tion believed that they had accepted a holy contract, or covenant, with God, which obliged them to establish a scripturally ordained church and charge their descendants with its preservation. In return for upholding this New England Way, God would make the city upon a hill prosper and shield it from corruption.

Relatively few second-generation Puritans, on the other hand, were willing to join the elect. By 1650, for example, fewer than half the adults in John Winthrop's congregation were saints. The principal reason was the second generation's reluctance to subject themselves to a grilling before relatives and friends. All children who matured in Puritan towns must have witnessed at least one person suffer an ordeal like that of Sarah Fiske. For more than a year, Fiske answered petty charges of speaking uncharitably about her relatives—especially her husband—and then was admitted to the Wenham, Massachusetts, church only after publicly denouncing herself as worse “than any toad.”

Because Puritan churches baptized only babies born to saints, the unwillingness of the second generation to submit to the conversion relation confronted their parents with the prospect that their own grandchildren would remain unbaptized unless standards for church membership were loosened. In 1662 a convention of clergy devised a compromise known as the Half-Way Covenant, which permitted the children of all baptized adults, including nonsaints, to receive baptism. This covenant allowed the founders' descendants to transmit potential church membership to their grandchildren, but it left their adult children “halfway” members who could not take communion or vote in church affairs. When forced to choose between a church system founded on a pure membership of the elect and one that embraced the entire community, New Englanders, after bitter struggles in many congregations, sacrificed purity for community.

The Half-Way Covenant signaled the eventual end of the New England Way. The elect had been unable to bring up a new generation of saints whose religious fervor equaled their own. Most adults chose to remain in “halfway” status for life, and the saints became a shrinking minority as the third and fourth generations matured. Sainthood tended to flow in certain families, and by the 1700s there were more women among the elect than men. But because women could not vote in church affairs, religious authority stayed in male hands. Nevertheless, ministers publicly recognized women's role in upholding piety and the church itself.

## *Expansion and Native Americans*

As settlements grew and colonists prospered, Native Americans declined. Although Indians began to recover from the initial epidemics by midcentury, the settlers brought new diseases such as diphtheria, measles, and tuberculosis, as well as new outbreaks of smallpox, that took heavy tolls. New England's Indian population was reduced from 125,000 in 1600 to 10,000 in 1675.

Native Americans felt the English presence in other ways. The fur trade, which initially benefited interior natives, became a liability after midcentury. Once Indians began hunting for trade instead of just for their own subsistence needs, they quickly depleted the beavers and other fur-bearing animals of the region. And because English traders customarily advanced trade goods on credit to Indian hunters before the hunting season, the lack of pelts pushed many natives into debt. In this situation traders such as John Pyncheon of Springfield, Massachusetts, began taking Indian land as collateral and selling it to settlers.

Elsewhere, English townsmen, eager to expand their agricultural output and provide land for their sons, voted themselves larger amounts of land after 1660 and insisted that their scattered parcels be consolidated. For example, Dedham, Massachusetts, which distributed only three thousand acres from 1636 to 1656, allocated five times as much in the next dozen years. Rather than continue living closely together, many farmers built homes on their outlying tracts, thereby coming into closer proximity to native settlements and the Indians' hunting, gathering, and fishing areas.

As English settlements expanded, they put new pressures on the natives and the land alike. As early as 1642, Miantonomi, a Narragansett sachem (chief), warned other New England Indians,

These English having gotten our land, they with scythes cut down the grass, and with axes fell the trees; their cows and horses eat the grass, and their hogs spoil our clam banks, and we shall all be starved.

Within a generation, Miantonomi's fears were being borne out. By clearing away extensive stands of trees for fields and for use as fuel and building material, colonial farmers altered an entire ecosystem. Deer were no longer attracted, and the wild plants upon which the Indians depended for food and medicine



### Colonizing New England, 1620–1674

*White expansion reached its maximum extent in the seventeenth century just before King Philip's War, which erupted as a result of the pressure on Indian communities. Frontier expansion did not resume in New England until after 1715.*

(Source: Frederick Merk, *History of the Westward Movement*. Copyright © 1979 by Lois Bannister Merk. Reprinted by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.)

could not grow. The soil became drier and flooding more frequent in the face of this deforestation. The settlers also introduced domestic livestock, which, according to English custom, ran wild. Pigs damaged Indian cornfields (until the natives adopted the alien practice of fencing their fields) and shellfish gathering sites. English cattle and horses quickly devoured native grasses, which the settlers then replaced with English varieties.

With native religious leaders powerless to halt the alarming decline of Indian population, land, and food sources, many Indians became demoralized. In their despair some turned to alcohol, increasingly available during the 1660s despite colonial efforts to suppress its sale to Native Americans. Interpreting the crisis as one of belief, other Indians joined those who had already converted to Christianity. By 1675 Puritan missionaries had established about thirty praying towns in eastern Massachusetts and Plymouth and on the islands of Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket. Supervised by missionaries, each praying town had its own Native American magistrate, usually a sachem, and many congregations had Indian preachers. Although the missionaries struggled to convert the Indians to "civilization," by which they meant English culture and lifestyles as well as to Christianity, most praying Indians integrated the

new faith with their native cultural identities. This practice reinforced the hostility of most settlers, who believed that all Indians were irrevocably "savage" and heathen.

Anglo-Indian conflict became acute during the 1670s because of pressure imposed on unwilling Indians to sell their land and to accept missionaries and the legal authority of colonial courts. Tension ran especially high in the Plymouth colony, where the English had engulfed the Wampanoags and forced a number of humiliating concessions on their leader Metacom, or "King Philip," the son of Massasoit, the Pilgrims' one-time ally.

In 1675 Plymouth hanged three Wampanoags for killing a Christian Indian and threatened to arrest Metacom. A minor incident in which several Wampanoags were shot while burglarizing a farmhouse led to a steady escalation of violence. About two-thirds of the Native Americans, including some Christian Indians, rallied around Metacom, igniting the conflict known as King Philip's War.

Metacom's forces—unlike the Indian combatants in the Pequot War, few of whom had fought with guns—were as well armed as the colonists. The Indians attacked 52 of New England's 90 towns (of which 12 were entirely destroyed), burned 1,200 houses,



slaughtered 8,000 head of cattle, and killed 600 colonists.

The tide turned against Metacom in 1676 after the Mohawk Indians of New York and many Christian Indians joined the English against him. English militiamen destroyed their enemies' food supplies and sold hundreds of captives into slavery, including Metacom's wife and child. "It must have been as bitter as death to him," wrote Puritan clergyman Cotton Mather, "to lose his wife and only son, for the Indians are marvellously fond and affectionate toward their children." Perhaps three thousand Indians starved or fell in battle, including Metacom himself, and many more fled to New York and Canada.

King Philip's War reduced southern New England's Indian population by almost 40 percent and eliminated overt resistance to white expansion. It also deepened English hostility toward Native Americans, even the Christian Indians who fought Metacom. In Massachusetts ten praying towns were disbanded and all Indians restricted to the remaining four; all Indian courts were dismantled; and "guardians" were appointed to supervise the reservations. "There is a cloud, a dark cloud upon the work of the Gospel among the poor Indians," mourned John Eliot. In the face of poverty and discrimination, remaining Indians managed to maintain their communities and cultural identities. To make up for the loss of traditional sources of sustenance, many worked as seamen or indentured servants, served in England's wars against the French in Canada, or made and sold baskets and other wares.

### *Economics, Gender, and Satan in Salem*

After the Half-Way Covenant's adoption in 1662, social and economic changes continued to undermine the New England Way. The dispersal of settlers away from town centers, besides putting pressure on Native Americans, generated friction between townspeople settled near the meetinghouse, who usually dominated politics, and "outliers," whose distance from the town center generally limited their influence over town affairs. Moreover, the region's economy had become more complex, especially in its several port cities, and its distribution of wealth more uneven. These developments undermined the Puritan ideal of community by fostering anxiety that a small minority might be profiting at the majority's expense. They also led many individuals—in both cities and the countryside—to act more competitively, aggressively, and im-

personally toward one another. John Winthrop's vision of a religiously oriented community sustained by a sense of reciprocity and charity was giving way to a world increasingly like the materialistic, acquisitive society that the original immigrants had fled in England.

Nowhere in New England did these trends have more disturbing effects than in Salem, Massachusetts, which grew rapidly after 1660 to become the region's second largest port. Trade made Salem prosperous but also destroyed the relatively equal society of humble fishermen and farmers that had once existed. A sharp distinction emerged between the port's residents—especially its rich merchants—and outlying farmers.

Salem's divisions were especially sharp in the precinct of Salem Village (now Danvers), an economically stagnant district located north of Salem Town. Those who lived in the village's eastern section farmed richer soils and benefited from Salem Town's prosperity. In contrast, residents of Salem Village's less fertile western half did not share in Salem Town's commercial expansion and had lost the political influence that they once held in town.

In late 1691 several Salem Village girls encouraged an African slave woman, Tituba, to tell fortunes and talk about sorcery. When the girls later began behaving strangely, villagers assumed that they were victims of witchcraft. Pressed to identify their tormenters, the girls named two local white women and Tituba.

So far the incident was not unusual. Until the late seventeenth century, belief in witchcraft was very strong at all levels of European and American society. Witches were people (nearly always women) whose pride, envy, discontent, or greed supposedly led them to sign a pact with the devil. Thereafter they allegedly used *maleficium* (the devil's supernatural power of evil) to torment neighbors and others by causing illness, destroying property, or—as with the girls in Salem Village—inhabiting or "possessing" their victims' bodies and minds. Apart from *maleficium*, witnesses usually claimed that witches displayed aggressive, unfeminine behavior. A disproportionate number of the 342 accused witches in New England were women who had inherited, or stood to inherit in the future, property beyond the one-third of a husband's estate normally bequeathed to widows. In other words, most witches were assertive women who had or soon might have more economic power and independence than many men. For New Englanders, who felt the need to limit both female independence and economic individual-

ism, witches symbolized the dangers awaiting those who disregarded such limits. In most earlier witchcraft accusations in New England, there was only one defendant and the case never went to trial. The few exceptions to this rule were tried with little fanfare. Events in Salem Village, on the other hand, led to a colonywide panic.

By April 1692 the girls had denounced two locally prominent farm wives and had identified the village's former minister as a wizard (male witch). Fears of witchcraft soon overrode doubts about the girls' credibility and led local judges to sweep aside normal procedural safeguards. Specifically the judges ignored the law's ban on "spectral evidence"—testimony that a spirit resembling the accused had been seen tormenting a victim. Thereafter accusations multiplied until the jails overflowed with accused witches.

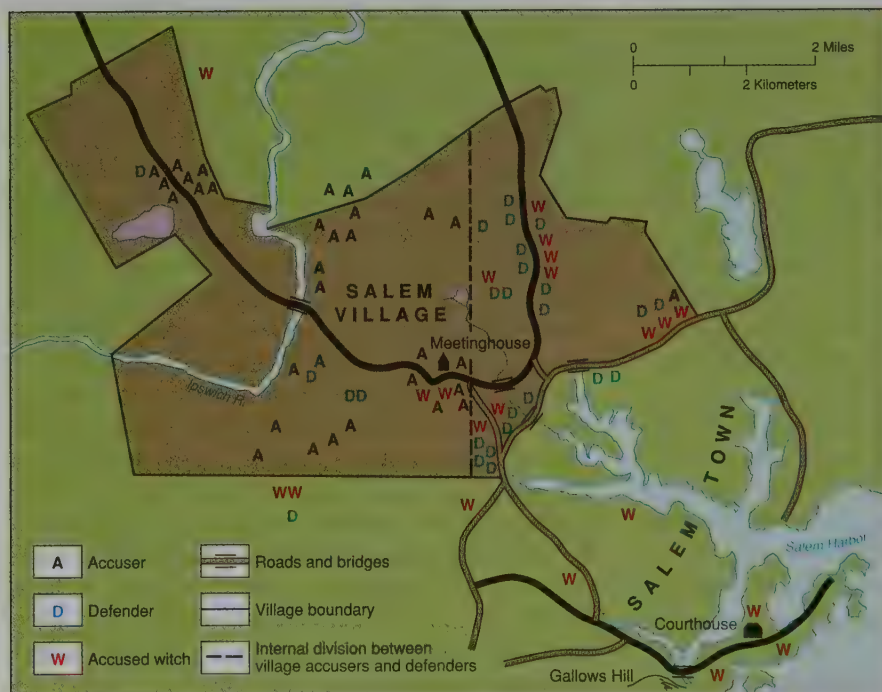
The pattern of hysteria in Salem Village reflected that community's internal divisions. Most charges came from the village's troubled western division, and most of those accused came from wealthier families in the eastern village or in Salem Town.

Patterns of gender and age were also apparent in the accusations. Two-thirds of all accusers were "possessed" girls or young women aged eleven to twenty, and more than half had lost one or more parents in conflicts between Indians and settlers in Maine. They and other survivors had fled to Massachusetts, where most were now servants in other families' households. They most frequently named as witches middle-aged wives and widows—women who had avoided the poverty and uncertainty they themselves faced. At the same time, the "possessed" accusers gained momentary power and prominence by voicing the anxieties and

#### Petition of Mary Easty, 1690

(Detail) In her petition Easty swore that "I know not the least thing of witchcraft."

Tribunall I fear that I know not the least thing of witchcraft therefore I cannot I dare not belye my own soule I beg your honours not to deny this my humble petition from a poor dy ing innocent person and I question not but the Lord will give a blessing to your endeavours



#### The Geography of Witchcraft: Salem Village, 1692

Geographic patterns of witchcraft testimony mirrored tensions within Salem Village. Accused witches and their defenders lived mostly in the village's eastern division or in Salem Town, whereas their accusers overwhelmingly resided in the village's western sector.

(Source: Adapted from Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum, *Salem Possessed: The Social Origins of Witchcraft* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1974).)



hostilities of many others in their community and by virtually dictating the course of events in and around Salem for several months.

The number of persons facing trial multiplied quickly. Those found guilty desperately tried to stave off death by implicating others. As the pandemonium spread beyond Salem, fear dissolved ties of friendship and family. A minister heard himself condemned by his own granddaughter. A seven-year-old girl helped send her mother to the gallows. Fifty persons saved themselves by confessing. Twenty others who would neither disgrace their own name nor betray the guiltless went to their graves. Shortly before she was hanged, a victim of the witch hunters named Mary Easty begged the court to come to its senses: "I petition your honors not for my own life, for I know I must die . . . [but] if it be possible, that no more innocent blood be shed."

By late 1692 most Massachusetts ministers had come to doubt that justice was being done. They objected that spectral evidence, which was crucial in most convictions, lacked legal credibility because the devil could manipulate it. New Englanders, concluded Increase Mather, a leading clergyman, had fallen victim to a deadly game of "blind man's buffet" set up by Satan and were "hotly and madly, mauling one another in the dark." Backed by the clergy (and alarmed by an accusation against his wife), Governor William Phips forbade any further imprisonments for witchcraft in October—by which time over a hundred individuals were in jail and twice that many stood accused—and shortly thereafter he suspended all trials. Phips ended the terror in early 1693 by pardoning all those convicted or suspected of witchcraft.

The witchcraft hysteria reflected profound anxieties over social change in New England. The underlying causes for this tension were evident in the antagonism of Salem Village's communally oriented farmers toward the competitive, individualistic, and impersonal way of life represented by Salem Town. In this clash of values, the rural villagers assumed the symbolic role of purging their city upon a hill of its commercial witches, only to leave the landscape desecrated by their gallows.

By the last years of the seventeenth century, the New England Way had lost its relevance for the generation reaching maturity. Eighteenth-century New Englanders would be far less willing to accept society's right to restrict their personal behavior and economic freedom. True to their Puritan roots, they would retain their strong religious convictions and their self-discipline, which many began applying to the pursuit of material gain.

Throughout the seventeenth century, as New England moved away from its roots, the Chesapeake region to the south also underwent a radical transformation that gave it a new prominence. But the differences between the two regions remained as great as ever.

## Chesapeake Society

Virginia's survival was no longer at stake when James I took control of the colony in 1624 from the bankrupt Virginia Company. The company had built a successful colony but destroyed itself in the process. Thereafter Virginia and its neighbor, Maryland, devoted themselves single-mindedly to the production of tobacco for export. In this pursuit, the Chesapeake was quite unlike New England, where farm families sought primarily to feed themselves. Also unlike New England, Chesapeake society was sharply divided between a few wealthy planters who dominated a majority consisting of indentured servants and small but growing numbers of black slaves and poor white farmers.

### *State and Church in Virginia*

King James I disliked representative government and planned to rule Virginia through a governor of his own choosing, who would appoint and dismiss advisers to a newly created council. But Virginians petitioned repeatedly that their elected assembly be revived. In 1628 the new king, Charles I, grudgingly relented, but only to induce the assembly to lay a tax on tobacco exports that would transfer the cost of the colony's government from the crown to Virginia's taxpayers.

After 1630 the need for additional taxes led royal governors to call regular assemblies. The small number of elected representatives, or burgesses, initially met as a single body with the council to pass laws. During the 1650s the legislature split into two chambers—the House of Burgesses and the Governor's Council, whose members held lifetime appointments. Later other royal colonies all established bicameral legislatures like Virginia's.

Local government varied widely during Virginia's first quarter-century. After experimenting with various institutions of local administration, in 1634 Virginia's settlers adopted England's county-court system. The courts' members, or justices of the peace, acted as judges; they also set local tax rates, paid county officials, and saw to the construction and maintenance of

roads, bridges, and public buildings. As in England, the justices and the sheriffs, who administered the counties during the courts' recesses, gained office by the royal governor's appointment instead of by citizens' votes. Everywhere south of New England, unelected county courts would become the basic unit of local government by 1710.

In contrast to Puritan New England, Virginia had as its established church the Church of England. First instituted in 1618, Anglican vestries governed each parish. The six vestrymen handled all church finances, determined who was deserving of poor relief, and investigated complaints against the minister. The taxpayers, who were legally obliged to pay fixed rates to the Anglican Church, elected vestries until 1662, when the assembly made them self-perpetuating and independent of the voters.

Because few counties supported more than one parish, many residents could not conveniently attend services. A chronic shortage of clergymen left many communities without functioning congregations. In 1662 just ten ministers served Virginia's forty-five parishes. Compared to New Englanders, Chesapeake dwellers felt religion's influence lightly.

### *Virginia's First Families*

Virginia encountered great difficulty in developing a social elite able and willing to provide disinterested public service. By 1630 all but a few of the gentlemen sent by the Virginia Company had either died or returned to England.

The next cycle of leaders were primarily middle class in origins, but over time they acquired great wealth. Some built large estates by defrauding Virginia Company stockholders. Others were rough-hewn gamblers who risked all on tobacco and won big. From 1630 to 1660, these individuals dominated Virginia's council and became even richer through land grants, tax exemptions, and public salaries. Because they had few or no children to assume their place in society, however, their influence died with them.

From 1660 to 1675, a third cycle of immigrants, who generally arrived after 1645, assumed political power. Principally members of English merchant families engaged in trade with Virginia, they had become planters. They usually emigrated with wealth, education, and burning ambition. By 1670 they controlled the council. Most of them profited from "public" service by obtaining huge land grants.

Unlike their predecessors, this group bequeathed their wealth and power to future generations, later known as the First Families of Virginia. Among them were the Burwell, Byrd, Carter, Harrison, Lee, Ludwell, Randolph, and Taylor families. The First Families would dominate Virginia politics for two centuries, and four of the first five American presidents would be descended from them.

### *Maryland*

Until 1632 successful English colonization had resulted from the ventures of joint-stock companies, but afterward the crown repeatedly made presents of the Virginia Company's forfeited territory to reward English politicians. Overseas settlement thereafter resulted from grants of crown land to proprietors, who assumed the responsibility for peopling, governing, and defending their colonies.

In 1632 the first such grant went to Lord Baltimore (Cecilius Calvert) for a large tract of land north of the Potomac River and east of Chesapeake Bay, which he named Maryland in honor of England's Queen Henrietta Maria. Lord Baltimore also secured freedom from royal taxation, the power to appoint all sheriffs and judges, and the privilege of creating a local nobility. The only checks on the proprietor's power were the crown's control of war and trade and the requirement that an elected assembly approve all laws.

With Charles I's consent, Lord Baltimore intended to create an overseas refuge for English Catholics, who constituted about 2 percent of England's population. Although English Catholics were rarely molested and many (like the Calverts) were very wealthy, they could not worship in public, had to pay tithes to the Anglican Church, and were barred from holding political office.

In making Maryland a Catholic haven, Baltimore had to avoid antagonizing English Protestants. He sought to accomplish this by transplanting to the Chesapeake the old English institution of the manor—an estate on which a lord could maintain private law courts and employ as his chaplain a Catholic priest. Local Catholics could then come to the manor to hear Mass and receive the sacraments privately. Baltimore adapted Virginia's headright system (see Chapter 2) by offering wealthy English Catholic aristocrats large land grants on condition that they bring settlers at their own cost. Anyone transporting five adults (a requirement raised to twenty by 1640) received a two-thousand-acre manor. Baltimore hoped that this arrangement would



### Artifacts from Early Virginia

*This double-edged sword (shown with fragments of its guard and pommel) and elaborate pipe tamper (featuring a man wearing armor and smoking a pipe) were unearthed at Flowerdew Hundred, an early English settlement near present-day Hopewell, Virginia, and date from the first half of the seventeenth century.*



allow Catholics to survive and prosper in Maryland while making it unnecessary to pass any special laws alarming to Protestants.

Maryland's initial colonization proceeded quite smoothly. In 1634 the first two hundred settlers landed. Maryland was the first colony spared a starving time, thanks to the Calvert family's careful study of Virginia's early history. The new colony's success showed that English overseas expansion had come of age. Baltimore, however, stayed in England, governing as an absentee proprietor, and few Catholic settlers went to Maryland. From the outset, Protestants formed the majority of the population. Maryland became a society of independent landowners because land prices were low and few settlers consequently were willing to become tenants on the manors. These conditions doomed the Calvert family's dream of creating a manorial system of mostly Catholic lords collecting rents. By 1675 all of Maryland's sixty nonproprietary manors had evolved into plantations.

There was little religious tension in Maryland in the colony's first years, but the situation worsened over time. The Protestant majority dominated the elected assembly, but many Catholics (including several Calvert relatives) became large landowners, held high public office, and dominated the appointive upper house. Serious religious problems first emerged in 1642, when

Catholics and Protestants in the capital at St. Mary's argued over use of the city's chapel, which the two groups had shared until then. As antagonisms intensified, Baltimore drafted the Act for Religious Toleration, which the assembly passed in 1649. The toleration act was America's first law affirming liberty of worship. However, it did not protect non-Christians, nor did it separate church and state, since it empowered the government to punish religious offenses such as blasphemy.

The toleration act also failed to secure religious peace. In 1654 the Protestant majority barred Catholics from voting, ousted Governor William Stone (a pro-tolerance Protestant), and repealed the toleration act. In 1655 Stone raised an army of both faiths to regain the government but was defeated at the Battle of the Severn River. The victors imprisoned Stone and hanged three Catholic leaders. Catholics in Maryland actually experienced more trouble than had their counterparts during the English Civil War, in which Catholics were seldom molested by the victorious Puritans.

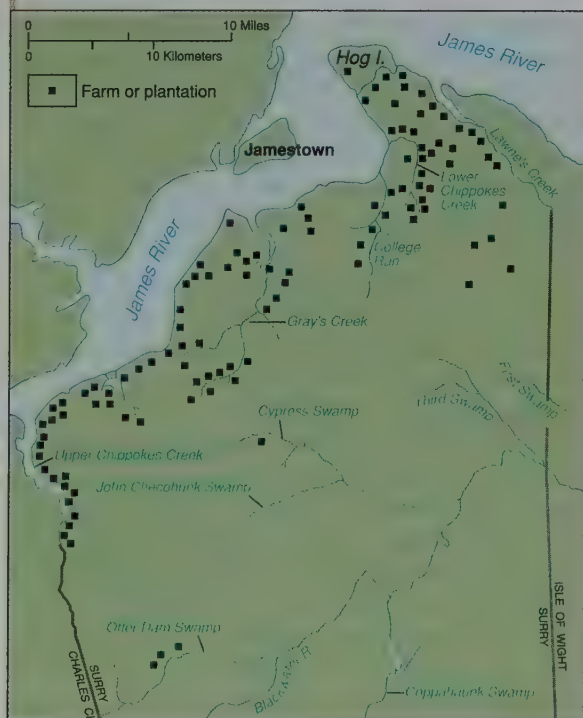
Maryland remained in Protestant hands until 1658. Ironically, Lord Baltimore resumed control by order of the Puritan authorities then ruling England. Even so, the Calverts encountered enormous obstacles in governing Maryland during the next four decades because of Protestant resistance to any political influence by Catholics.

## Tobacco Shapes a Way of Life

Compared to colonists in New England's compact towns (where five hundred people often lived within a mile of the meetinghouse), Chesapeake residents had few neighbors. A typical community comprised about two dozen families in an area of twenty-five square miles, or about six persons per square mile. Friendship networks seldom extended beyond a three-mile walk from one's farm and rarely included more than twenty adults. Many, if not most, Chesapeake inhabitants lived in a constricted world much like that of Robert Boone, a Maryland farmer described by an Annapolis paper as having died at age seventy-nine "on the same Plantation where he was born in 1680, from which he never went 30 Miles in his Life."

### Pattern of Settlement in Surry County, Virginia, 1620–1660

Unlike the New England colonists, whose settlements were usually nucleated around a town center (see the map of Sudbury, Massachusetts, on p. 54), the Chesapeake population distributed itself thinly along the banks of rivers and creeks.



(Source: Thad W. Tate and David Ammerman, eds., *The Chesapeake in the Seventeenth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979). Published for the Institute of Early American History and Culture. Reprinted by permission.)

The isolated folk in Virginia and Maryland and in the unorganized settlements of what would become North Carolina shared a way of life shaped by one overriding fact: their future depended on the price of tobacco. Tobacco had dominated Chesapeake agriculture since 1618, when demand for the crop exploded and prices spiraled to dizzying levels. The boom ended in 1629 after prices sank a stunning 97 percent. After stabilizing, tobacco rarely again fetched more than 10 percent of its former price.

Despite the plunge, tobacco stayed profitable as long as it sold for over two pence per pound *and* was cultivated on fertile soil near navigable water. The plant grew best on level ground with good internal drainage, so-called light soil, which was usually found beside rivers. Locating a farm along Chesapeake Bay or the region's web of rivers also minimized transportation costs by permitting tobacco to be loaded on ships at wharves near one's home. Perhaps 80 percent of all Chesapeake homes lay within a half-mile of a riverbank, and most within just six hundred feet of the shoreline.

From such waterfront bases, wealthy planters built wharves that served not only as depots for tobacco exports but also as distribution centers for imported goods. The planters' control of both export and import commerce stunted the growth of towns and the emergence of a powerful merchant class. Urbanization therefore proceeded slowly in the Chesapeake, even in a capital like Maryland's St. Mary's, which as late as 1678 was still a mere hamlet of thirty scattered houses.

Although the tobacco crash left small producers struggling to support themselves, cultivating the "weed" could generate a large income for anyone with a sizable work force. Tobacco thus sustained a sharp demand for labor that lured about 110,000 English to the Chesapeake from 1630 to 1700. Ninety percent of these immigrants were indentured servants. Men were more valued as field hands than women, so 80 percent of servants were males, usually in their twenties.

## Mortality, Gender, and Kinship

So few women immigrated to the Chesapeake in the early years of colonization that barely a third of all male servants could find brides before 1650. Furthermore, marriage occurred relatively late because most inhabitants immigrated as servants whose indentures forbade them to wed before completing their term of labor. Their own scarcity gave women a great advantage in



negotiating favorable marriages. Female indentured servants often found prosperous planters to be their suitors and to buy their remaining time of service.

Death ravaged seventeenth-century Chesapeake society mercilessly and left domestic life exceptionally fragile. Before 1650 the greatest killers were diseases contracted from contaminated water: typhoid, dysentery, and salt poisoning. After 1650 malaria became endemic as sailors, arriving from Africa, along with a few Africans, carried it into the marshy lowlands, where the disease was spread rapidly by mosquito bites. Life expectancy in the 1600s was about forty-eight for men and forty-four for women—slightly less than in England but nearly twenty years less than in New England. Servants died at horrifying rates, with perhaps 40 percent going to their graves within six years of arrival, and 70 percent by age forty-nine. Such high death rates severely crippled family life. Half of all people married in Charles County, Maryland, during the late 1600s became widows or widowers within seven years. The typical Maryland family saw half of its four children die in childhood.

Chesapeake women who lost their husbands tended to enjoy greater property rights than widows elsewhere. To ensure that their own children would inherit the family estate in the event that their widows remarried, Chesapeake men often wrote wills giving their wives perpetual and complete control of their estates. A widow in such circumstances gained economic independence yet still faced enormous pressure to marry a man who could produce income by farming her fields.

The prevalence of early death produced complex households in which stepparents might raise children with two or three different surnames. Mary Keeble of Middlesex County, Virginia, bore seven children before being widowed at age twenty-nine, whereupon she married Robert Beverley, a prominent planter. Mary died in 1678 at age forty-one after having five children by Beverley, who then married Katherine Hone, a widow with one child. Upon Beverley's death in 1687, Katherine quickly wed Christopher Robinson, who had just lost his wife and needed a mother for his four children. Christopher and Katherine's household included children named Keeble, Beverley, Hone, and Robinson. This tangled chain of six marriages among seven people eventually produced twenty-five children who lived at least part of their lives with one or more stepparents.

The combination of predominantly male immigration and devastating death rates notably retarded popu-

lation growth. Although the Chesapeake had received perhaps 89,000 English immigrants between 1630 and 1700, its white population stood at just 85,000 in 1700. By contrast, a benign disease environment and a more balanced gender ratio among the 28,000 immigrants to New England during the 1600s allowed that region's white population to more than triple to 91,000 by 1700.

The Chesapeake's dismal demographic history began improving in the late seventeenth century. By then resistance acquired from childhood immunities allowed native-born residents to survive into their fifties, or ten years longer than immigrants. As the number of families slowly rose, the ratio of men to women became more equal, since half of all children were girls. By 1690 an almost even division existed between males and females. Thereafter, the white population grew primarily through an excess of births over deaths rather than through immigration, so that by 1720 the Chesapeake was primarily a native-born society.

### *Tobacco's Troubles*

The massive importation of servants into the seventeenth-century Chesapeake widened the gap between rich and poor. Taking advantage of the headright system, a few planters built up large landholdings and then earned substantial incomes from their servants' labor. The servants' lot was harsh. Most were poorly fed, clothed, and housed. The exploitation of labor in the Chesapeake was unequaled anywhere in the English-speaking world outside the West Indies.

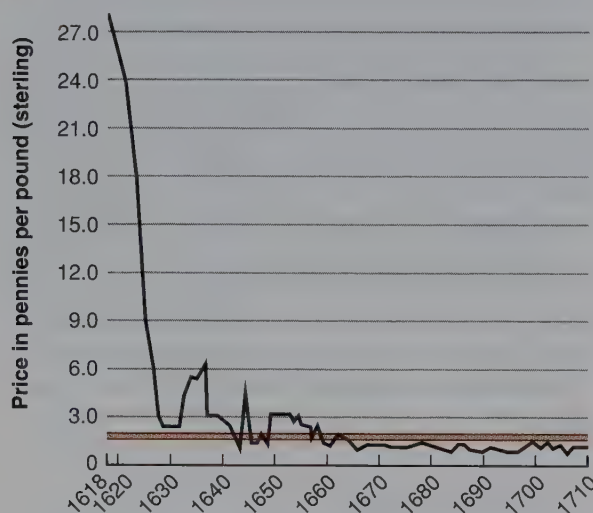
Servants faced a bleak future when their indentures ended. Having received no pay, they entered into freedom almost penniless. Virginia obliged masters to provide a new suit of clothes and a year's supply of corn to a freed servant. Maryland required these items plus a hoe and an ax and gave the right to claim fifty acres whenever an individual could pay to have the land surveyed and deeded.

Maryland's policy of reserving fifty acres for former servants permitted many of its freedmen to become landowners. Two-thirds of all Chesapeake servants went to Virginia, however, where no such entitlement existed. After 1650 Virginia speculators monopolized most of the light soil along riverbanks so essential for a profitable farm, and freedmen found land ever more unaffordable. Upward mobility was possible, but few achieved it.

After 1660 upward mobility almost vanished from the Chesapeake as the price of tobacco fell far below

### Tobacco Prices, 1618–1710

*Even after its great plunge in the 1620s, tobacco remained profitable until about 1660, when its price fell below the break-even point—the income needed to support a family or pay off a farm mortgage.*



Source: Russell R. Menard, "The Chesapeake Economy, 1618–1720: An Interpretation" (unpublished paper presented at the Johns Hopkins University Seminar on the Atlantic Community, November 20, 1973) and "Farm Prices of Maryland Tobacco, 1659–1710," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, LVIII (Spring 1973): 85.

profitable levels, to a penny a pound. So began a depression lasting over fifty years. Despite their own tobacco losses, large planters earned other income from rents, interest on loans, some shopkeeping, and government fees.

Most landowners held on by offsetting tobacco losses with small sales of corn and cattle to the West Indies. A typical family nevertheless inhabited a shack barely twenty feet by sixteen feet and owned no more property than Adam Head of Maryland possessed when he died in 1698: three mattresses without bedsteads, a chest and barrel that served as table and chair, two pots, a kettle, "a parcell of old pewter," a gun, and some books. Most tobacco farmers lacked furniture, lived on mush or stew because they had just one pot, and slept on the ground—often on a pile of rags. Having fled poverty in England or the Caribbean for the promise of a better life, they found utter destitution in the Chesapeake.

Servants who completed their indentures after 1660 fared even worse, for the depression slashed wages well below the level needed to build savings and in this

way placed landownership beyond their means. Lacking capital, those living as tenants could not afford to breed cattle for the West Indies, and they had little corn to sell after meeting their own needs. Ex-servants formed a frustrated and embittered underclass that seemed destined to remain landless and poor.

### Bacon's Rebellion

By the 1670s these bleak conditions trapped most Virginia landowners in a losing battle against poverty and left the colony's laborers and freedmen verging on despair. Both groups were capable of striking out in blind rage if an opportunity presented itself to stave off economic disaster. In 1676 this human powder keg exploded in violence that left hundreds of Indians dead, dozens of plantations looted, and Virginia's capital, Jamestown, burned. The person who lit the match was Nathaniel Bacon, a wealthy, well-educated young Englishman who had immigrated to Virginia in 1674 and established a plantation. He was a bold man and an inspiring speaker, and Governor William Berkeley, a distant relative, had immediately appointed him to the council.

Virginia had been free of serious conflict with Native Americans since the Third Anglo-Powhatan War (1644–1646). During that struggle, forces under Opechancanough, then nearly a century old but able to direct battles from a litter, killed five hundred of the colony's eight thousand whites before meeting defeat. By 1653 tribes encircled by English settlement began agreeing to remain within boundaries set by the government—in effect, on reservations. White settlement then expanded north to the Potomac River, and by 1675 Virginia's four thousand Indians were greatly outnumbered by forty thousand whites.

As in New England, tensions flared between natives struggling against depopulation and nearby settlers bent on altering the landscape. In Virginia tensions ran particularly high because Governor Berkeley and a few friends held a fur-trade monopoly that profited from friendly relations with some of the frontier Indians. As a result, settler resentments against the governor became fused with those against Indians. In June 1675 a dispute between some Doeg Indians and a Virginia farmer escalated until a force of Virginia and Maryland militia pursuing the Doegs murdered fourteen friendly Susquehannocks and then executed five of their leaders during a peace conference. The violence was now unstoppable.

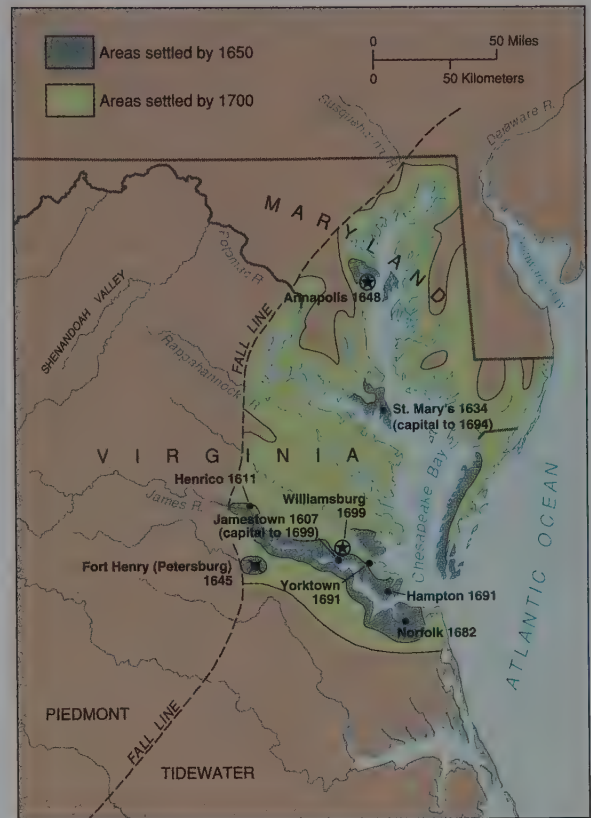


Governor Berkeley proposed defending the panic-stricken frontier with an expensive chain of forts linked by patrols. Stung by low tobacco prices and taxes that took almost a quarter of their yearly incomes, small farmers preferred the less costly solution of waging a war of extermination. Despite orders from Berkeley not to retaliate, three hundred settlers elected Bacon to lead them against nearby Indians in April 1676. Bacon's expedition found only peaceful Indians but massacred them anyway.

When he returned in June 1676, Bacon sought authority to wage war "against all Indians in generall." Bacon's newfound popularity forced the governor to grant his demand. The legislature voted a program designed to appeal to both hard-pressed taxpayers and ex-servants desperate for land. The assembly defined as enemies any Indians who left their villages without English permission (even if they did so out of fear of attack by Bacon), and declared their lands forfeited. Bacon's troops were free to plunder all "enemies" of their furs, guns, wampum, and corn harvests and also to keep Indian prisoners as slaves. The assembly's incentives for enlisting were directed at land-bound buccaneers eager to get rich quickly by seizing land and enslaving any Indians who fell into their clutches.

But Berkeley soon had second thoughts about letting Bacon's thirteen hundred men continue their frontier slaughter and called them back. The governor's order spared more Indians from attack, leading Bacon's men to rebel and march on Jamestown. Forcing Berkeley to flee across Chesapeake Bay, the rebels burned Jamestown, offered freedom to any Berkeley supporters' servants or slaves who joined the uprising, and then looted their enemies' plantations. At the very moment of triumph, however, Bacon died of dysentery in late 1676, and his followers dispersed.

The tortured course of Bacon's Rebellion revealed a society under deep internal stress. The revolt began as an effort to displace escalating tensions within white society onto local Indians. Because social success in Virginia depended on accumulating land and labor, farmers and landless ex-servants alike responded enthusiastically to the prospect of taking Indian lands, stealing their furs, wampum, and harvests, and enslaving prisoners. So easily did the insurrection disintegrate into an excuse for settlers of all classes to plunder other whites, however, that it appears that the rebels were driven by economic opportunism as well as by racism. Bacon's Rebellion was an outburst of long pent-up frustrations by marginal taxpayers and ex-servants, dri-



### Colonizing the Chesapeake, 1607–1660

*The native-settler frontier moved slowly westward until after Indian defeat in the Third Anglo-Powhatan War (1644–1646). By 1700, when the European and African population had reached 110,000, newcomers had spread virtually throughout the tidewater.*

ven to desperation by the tobacco depression, as well as by wealthier planters excluded from Berkeley's circle of favorites.

### Slavery

Bacon's Rebellion exposed the crackling tensions underlying class relations among Chesapeake whites. This social instability derived in large part from the massive importation of indentured servants, who later became free agents in an economy that offered them little but poverty while their former masters seemingly prospered. But even before Bacon's Rebellion, the acute potential for class conflict was diminishing as Chesapeake planters gradually substituted black slaves for white servants.

Racial slavery developed in three stages in the Chesapeake. Africans first began appearing from 1619 to 1640. Although Anglo-Virginians carefully distinguished blacks from whites in official documents—in a manner that seems to show a tendency to discriminate according to race—they did not assume that every African sold was a slave for life. The same was true for Indians captured in the colony's wars. Some Africans gained their freedom, and a few, such as Anthony and Mary Johnson, owned their own tobacco farms. During the second phase, spanning the years 1640–1660, unmistakable evidence survives that growing numbers of blacks and some Indians were treated as slaves and that their children inherited that status, in contrast to white indentured servants, who had fixed terms of service. At the same time there is ample evidence from this period of white and black laborers running away or rebelling against a master together, and occasionally marrying one another. Perhaps in reaction to such incidents, the colonies, after 1660, officially recognized slavery and regulated it by law. Maryland first defined slavery as a lifelong, inheritable, racial status in 1661. Virginia followed suit in 1670. This hardening of status lines did

not prevent some black and white laborers from joining Bacon's Rebellion. Indeed the last contingent of rebels to lay down their arms consisted entirely of slaves and servants. By 1705 strict legal codes defined the place of slaves in society and set standards of racial etiquette. By then free blacks like Mary Johnson's grandchildren had all but disappeared from the Chesapeake. Although this period saw racial slavery become fully legalized, many of the specific practices enacted into law had evolved into custom before 1660.

The English never considered slavery a status appropriate for any European or any Christian. Although they could have enslaved enemies such as the Irish and Spanish, they always reserved this complete denial of human rights for nonwhites.

Emerging gradually in the Chesapeake, slavery was formally codified by planter elites attempting to stabilize Chesapeake society and defuse the resentment of whites. In deeming nonwhite "pagans" unfit for freedom, the elites created a common, exclusive identity for whites as free or potentially free persons.

Chesapeake planters began formulating this racial caste system before slavery itself became economically significant. As late as 1660, fewer than a thousand slaves lived in Virginia and Maryland. The number in bondage first became truly significant in the 1680s, when the Chesapeake's slave population (by now almost entirely black, owing to Indian decline) almost tripled, rising from forty-five hundred to about twelve thousand. By 1700 slaves made up 22 percent of the inhabitants and over 80 percent of all unfree laborers.

Having been made possible by racism, slavery replaced indentured servitude for economic reasons. First, it became more difficult to import indentured servants as the seventeenth century advanced because a gradual decline in England's population between 1650 and 1700 reduced the number of people willing to emigrate overseas. As England's population decreased, labor became more valuable at home, and wages rose by about 50 percent. Second, before 1690 the Royal African Company, which held a monopoly on selling slaves to the English colonies, shipped nearly all its cargoes to the West Indies. During the 1690s this monopoly was broken, and rival companies began shipping large numbers of Africans directly to the Chesapeake.

The emergence of slavery relaxed the economic strains within white society that had helped precipitate Bacon's Rebellion. Gradually after 1690, non-slave-owning whites came to see themselves as sharing a common interest with upper-class planters in maintaining social control over a black race regarded as alien and

### Tobacco Label

*The slave's central role in growing tobacco and serving his white master (here enjoying a smoke) is depicted.*





threatening. Slavery's establishment as the principal form of labor in the Chesapeake was part of a larger trend among England's plantation colonies, one that began in the Caribbean and spread to the new mainland colony of Carolina.

## The Spread of Slavery: The Caribbean and Carolina

Simultaneously with the expansion of European colonization in mainland North America, a second wave of settlement swept the West Indies. Between 1630 and 1642 almost 60 percent of the seventy thousand English who emigrated went to the Caribbean. In the 1640s the English West Indians began adapting their economy to large-scale slave labor and devising a code of social conduct for nonwhites. In this way, the West

Indies pioneered techniques of racial control that would later appear in the mainland colonies' plantation societies.

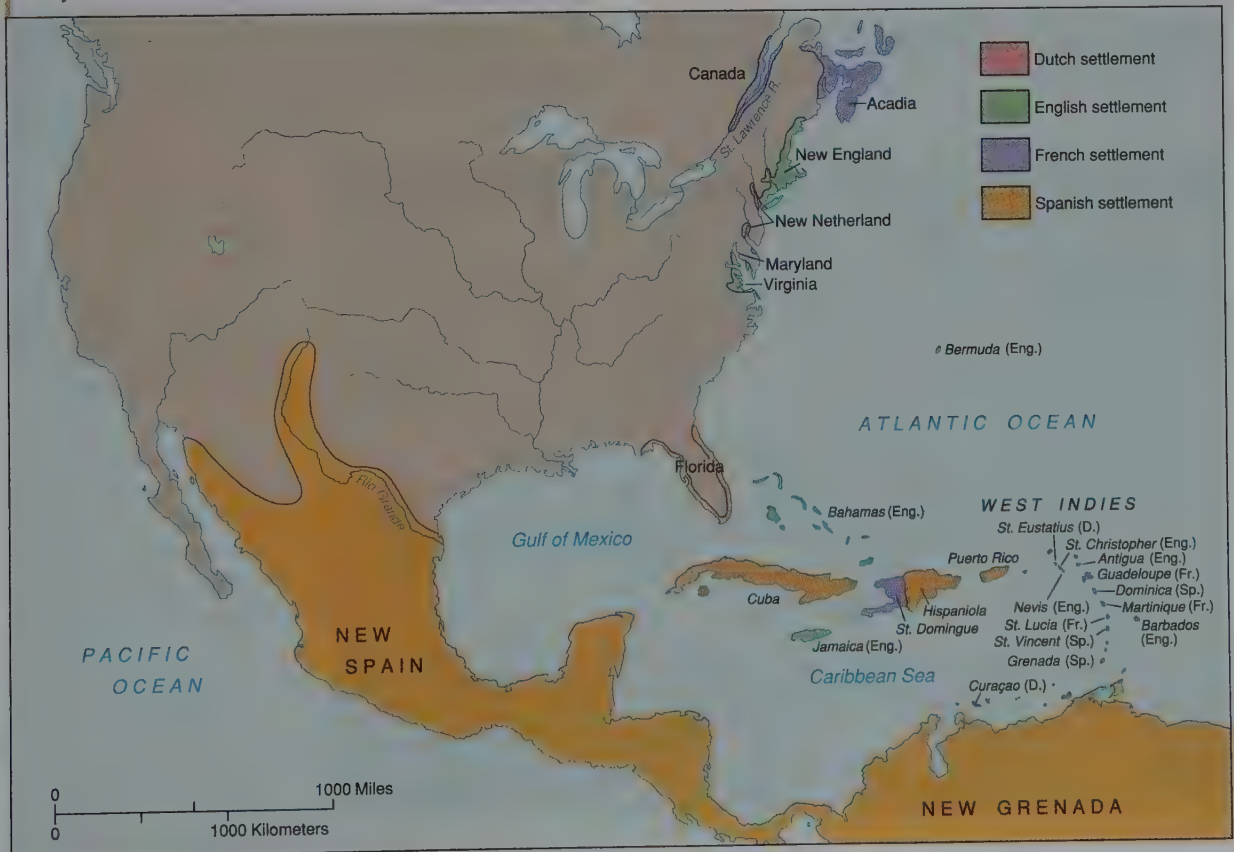
After 1660 a large outmigration of English islanders added significantly to English North America's population. Most of the migrants went to the Chesapeake and to Carolina, thereby introducing the habits and prejudices of plantation slaveholding, as well as some slaves, to the mainland colonies. By 1710, the population of Carolina, like that of the Caribbean colonies, was predominantly black and enslaved.

### *Sugar and Slaves*

As in the Chesapeake, a strong demand for tobacco led the first English settlers in the Caribbean to cultivate that plant almost exclusively. Although low prices inhibited upward mobility, through the 1630s the English

### The Caribbean Colonies, 1660

*Aside from Jamaica, England's sugar colonies were clustered in the eastern Caribbean's Leeward Islands. Lying within easy reach of seaborne attack, every English island but Barbados was the scene of major fighting.*



West Indies remained a society with a large percentage of independent landowners, an overwhelmingly white population, and no extreme inequality of wealth.

During the early 1640s an alternative to tobacco appeared that rapidly revolutionized the islands' economy and society. Dutch merchants familiar with Portuguese methods of sugar production in Brazil began encouraging English planters to raise and process sugar cane, which the Dutch would then market.

Because planters needed three times as many workers per acre to raise cane as tobacco, rising sugar production greatly multiplied the demand for labor. Before 1640 West Indians had imported white servants who signed an indenture, or contract, to work without pay for four to six years in return for free passage to America. After 1640, however, sugar planters increasingly purchased enslaved Africans from the Dutch to do common field work and used the indentured servants as overseers or skilled artisans.

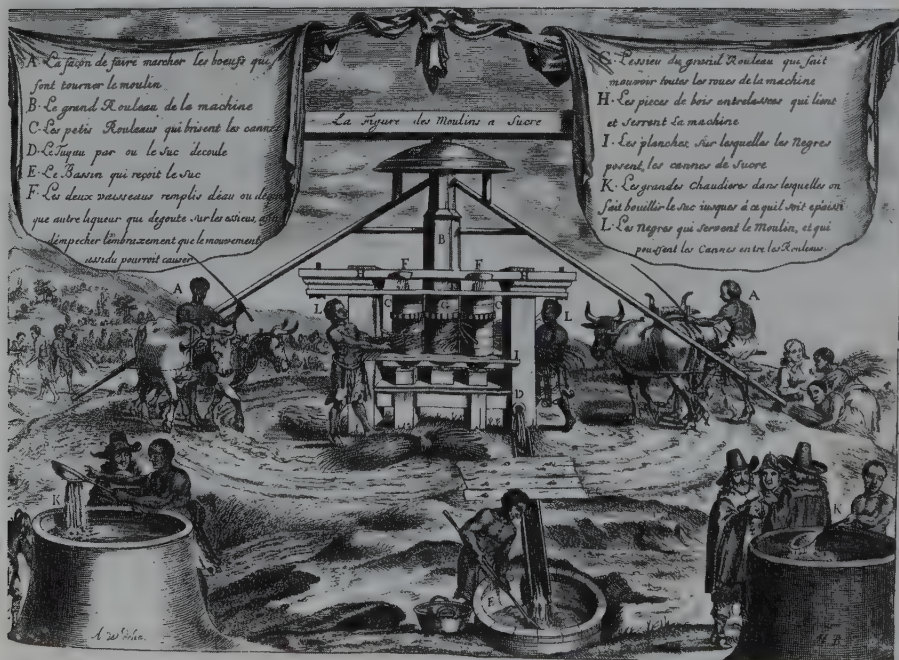
Although slavery had died out in England after the eleventh century, English immigrants to the Caribbean quickly copied the example set there by Spanish slaveowners. On Barbados, for example, English newcomers imposed slavery on both blacks and Indians immediately after settling on that island in 1627. The Barbadian government in 1636 condemned every black brought there to lifelong bondage. Planters on other English is-

lands likewise plunged into slaveowning with gusto.

Sugar planters like Sarah Horbin's husband preferred black slaves to white servants because slaves could be driven harder and maintained less expensively. Moreover, most servants ended their indentures after four years, but slaves toiled on until death. Although slaves initially cost two to four times more than servants, they proved a more economical long-term investment. In this way the profit motive and the racism that emerged with the "new slavery" (see Chapter 2) reinforced one another.

By 1670 the sugar revolution had transformed the British West Indies into a predominantly slave society. In 1713 blacks outnumbered whites by a margin of four to one. Although the number of blacks shot up from approximately 40,000 in 1670 to 130,000 in 1713, the white population remained stable at about 33,000 because the planters' preference for slave labor greatly reduced the importation of indentured servants after 1670.

Declining demand for white labor in the West Indies diverted the flow of English immigration from the islands to mainland North America and so contributed to population growth there. Furthermore, because the expansion of West Indian sugar plantations priced land beyond the reach of most whites, perhaps thirty thousand people left the islands from 1655 to 1700. Most



### African Slaves Making Sugar

*This drawing, published in 1665, shows slaves feeding sugar cane into a cattle-driven mill, which turns it into juice. Other slaves then boil the liquid.*



### Tuscarora Resistance, 1711

Defending their homeland against an influx of settlers, the Tuscaroras captured Baron Christopher von Graffenried, leader of the Swiss community at New Bern. Graffenried drew this sketch, which depicts him being held along with an English trader, John Lawson, and an African slave. Lawson was later executed.



whites who quit the West Indies also migrated to the mainland colonies—especially Carolina.

### Carolina: The First Restoration Colony

During the 1650s settlers from New England and the English West Indies established several unauthorized outposts along the swampy coast between Virginia and Spanish Florida. In 1663 King Charles II (who had assumed the throne when the Stuart monarchy was restored in 1660) bestowed this unpromising coast on several English supporters, making it the first of several Restoration colonies. The grateful proprietors named their colony Carolina in honor of Charles (*Carolus* in Latin).

Carolina grew haltingly until 1669, when one of the proprietors, Anthony Ashley Cooper, speeded up settlement by offering immigrants fifty-acre land grants for every family member, indentured servant, or slave they brought in. Cooper's action marked a turning point. In 1670 settlement of southern Carolina began when two hundred Barbadian and English settlers landed near modern-day Charleston, "in the very chops of the Spanish." Here, in the settlement they called Charles Town, they formed the colony's nucleus, with their own bicameral legislature distinct from that of the northern district.

Cooper and his secretary—John Locke, later acclaimed as one of the great philosophers of the age—devised an intricate plan for Carolina's settlement and government. Their Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina attempted to ensure the colony's stability by de-

creeing that political power and social rank should accurately reflect settlers' landed wealth. Thus they invented a three-tiered nobility that would hold two-fifths of all land, make laws through a Council of Nobles, and dispense justice through manorial law courts. Ordinary Carolinians with smaller landholdings were expected to defer to this nobility, although they would enjoy religious toleration and the benefits of English common law. Until the 1680s most settlers were small landowners from Barbados or the mainland colonies, along with some French Huguenots. Obtaining all the land they needed, they saw little reason to obey pseudofeudal lords and all but ignored most of the plans drawn up for them across the Atlantic. Southern Carolinians raised livestock and exported deerskins and Indian slaves (see below), and colonists in northern Carolina exported tobacco, lumber, and pitch, giving local people the name tarheels. These activities did not at first produce enough profit to warrant maintaining many slaves, and so self-sufficient white families predominated in the area.

But many southern Carolinians were not content merely to eke out a marginal existence. Like the first Virginians, they sought a staple crop that could make them rich. By the early eighteenth century, they found it—rice. The grain was familiar to slaves from Senegambia, where it constituted the basic foodstuff. Because rice, like sugar, enormously enriched a few men with capital to invest in costly dams, dikes, and slaves, it remade southern Carolina into a society resembling that of the West Indies. By earning annual profits of 25 percent, rice planters within a generation

became the only colonial elite whose wealth rivaled that of the Caribbean sugar planters.

The Carolina rice planters' huge profits had to be reaped at someone's expense, however. No matter how inhumanly they might be driven, indentured English servants simply did not survive in humid rice paddies swarming with malaria-bearing mosquitoes. The planters' solution was to import an ever-growing force of African slaves, who possessed two major advantages for masters. First, perhaps 15 percent of the Africans taken to Carolina had cultivated rice in their homeland, and their expertise was vital in teaching whites how to raise the unfamiliar crop. Second, many Africans had developed partial immunity to malaria, the infectious and deadly disease transmitted by mosquito bites, which was endemic to coastal regions of West Africa and which African-born slaves (and infected slave ships' crews) carried to the New World. (Tragically, the antibody that helps ward off malaria also tends to produce the sickle-cell trait, a genetic condition often fatal to those children who inherit it.) These two advantages made possible commercial rice production in Carolina. A great demand for black slave labor resulted, for a typical rice planter farming 130 acres needed sixty-five slaves. The proportion of slaves in southern Carolina's population spurted from 17 percent in 1680 to 67 percent in 1720. Carolina was Britain's sole mainland colony with a black majority.

Rice thrived only within a forty-mile-wide coastal strip extending from Cape Fear to present-day Georgia. The hot, humid, marshy lowlands quickly became infested with malaria. Carolinians grimly joked that the rice belt was a paradise in spring, an inferno in summer, and a hospital in the wet, chilly fall. In the worst months, planters' families usually escaped to the relatively cool and more healthful climate of Charles Town and let overseers supervise their harvests.

As long as Europeans outnumbered Africans, race relations could be somewhat relaxed. But as a black majority emerged and swelled, whites increasingly relied on force and fear to control their slaves, adopting many of the galling restrictions and gruesome punishments imposed on slaves in Barbados. Bondage in the mainland colony was becoming as cruel and harsh as in the West Indies.

White Carolinians' attitudes toward Native Americans likewise hardened into exploitation and violence. In the 1670s traders in southern Carolina armed nearby Indians and encouraged them to raid Spanish missions in Florida. These allies captured unarmed Guale, Apalachee, and Timucua Indians at the missions and

traded them, along with deerskins, to the Carolinians for guns and other European goods. The English then sold the enslaved Indians, mostly to planters in the West Indies. By the mid-1680s the Carolinians had extended the trade inland through alliances with the Yamasees (Guale Indians who had fled the inadequate protection of the Spanish in Florida) and the Creeks, a powerful confederacy centered in what is now western Georgia and northern Alabama. For three decades these Indians terrorized the Spanish and other Indians in the region with their slave raids. No statistical records of Carolina's Indian slave trade survive, but a recent study estimates that the number of Native Americans enslaved was in the tens of thousands. Once shipped to the West Indies, most died quickly because they lacked immunities to both European and tropical diseases.

Conflict came to northern Carolina in 1711 when the Tuscarora Indians, provoked by white encroachments on their land and by several instances of whites kidnapping Indians as slaves, destroyed New Bern, a frontier settlement of seven hundred Swiss immigrants. Northern Carolina enlisted the aid of southern Carolina and its well-armed Indian allies. By 1713, with a thousand of their people killed or enslaved (about one-fifth of the total population), the Tuscaroras surrendered. Nearly half the survivors eventually migrated to New York, where they became the sixth nation of the Iroquois Confederacy.

Having helped defeat the Tuscaroras, Carolina's Indian allies resented a growing number of incidents of cheating, violence, and enslavement perpetrated by English traders, and encroachments on their land by settlers. In 1715 the Yamasees, who were most seriously affected by these incidents, led a coordinated series of attacks on English trading houses and settlements. Only by enlisting the aid of the Cherokee Indians, and allowing four hundred slaves to bear arms, could the colony crush the uprising. Yamasees not killed or captured were driven back to Florida or to Creek towns.

The first two generations of white settlers and black slaves had cleared the unhealthy coastal regions and developed Carolina's profitable exports. With help from Indian allies, they had extinguished resistance from hostile Native Americans. In realizing these formidable accomplishments, they had received little aid from the absentee proprietors, whose main activities had been grabbing land for themselves, vetoing laws passed by the assemblies, and appointing unpopular governors. Carolinians came to regard the proprietors as indifferent even to their defense. After southern Car-



olinians overthrew proprietary rule in 1719 (Carolina's fourth major rebellion), the British monarchy intervened and by 1729 created two royal colonies, North Carolina and South Carolina.

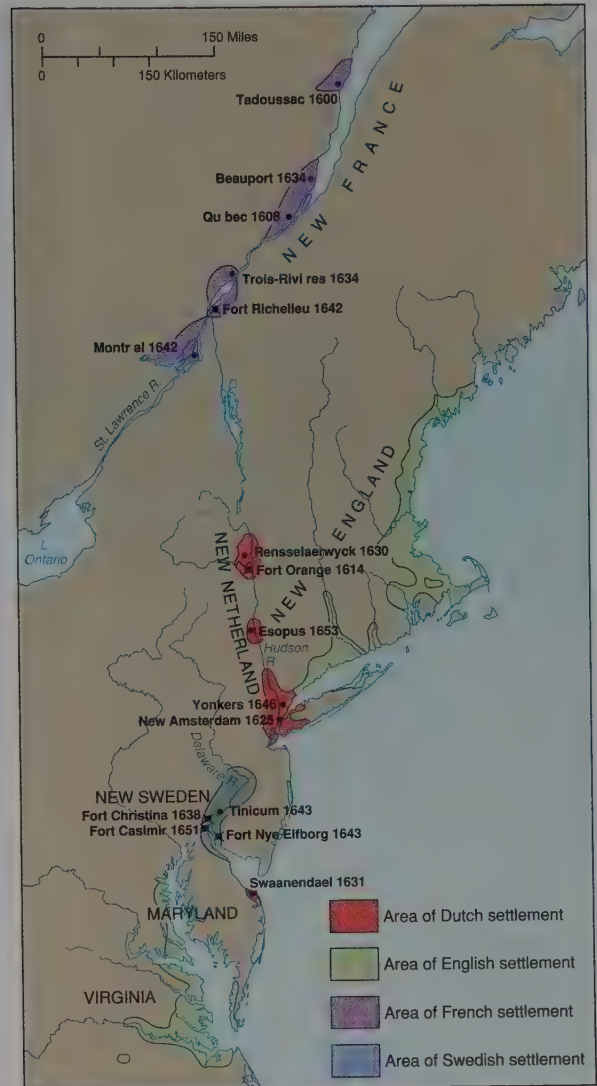
## The Middle Colonies

Between the Chesapeake and New England, a fourth mainland colonial region, the middle colonies, took shape, slowly at first. New Netherland and New Sweden were small commercial outposts, although the Dutch colony began to grow and flourish at midcentury. But in 1664, England seized New Netherland from the Dutch, and in 1681 King Charles II authorized a new colony where New Sweden had stood. These actions resulted in three additional Restoration colonies—New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. By the end of the seventeenth century, the middle colonies composed North America's fastest-growing region.

### *Precursors: New Netherland and New Sweden*

New Netherland became North America's first multi-ethnic society. Barely half its colonists were Dutch; most of the rest were Germans, French, Scandinavians, and Africans, free as well as enslaved. In 1643 the population included Protestants, Catholics, Jews, and Muslims, and eighteen European and African languages were spoken. But religion counted for little (in 1642 the colony had seventeen taverns but not one place of worship), and the settlers' get-rich-quick attitude had long sapped company profits as private individuals persisted in trading illegally in furs. In 1639 the company bowed to mounting pressure and legalized private fur trading.

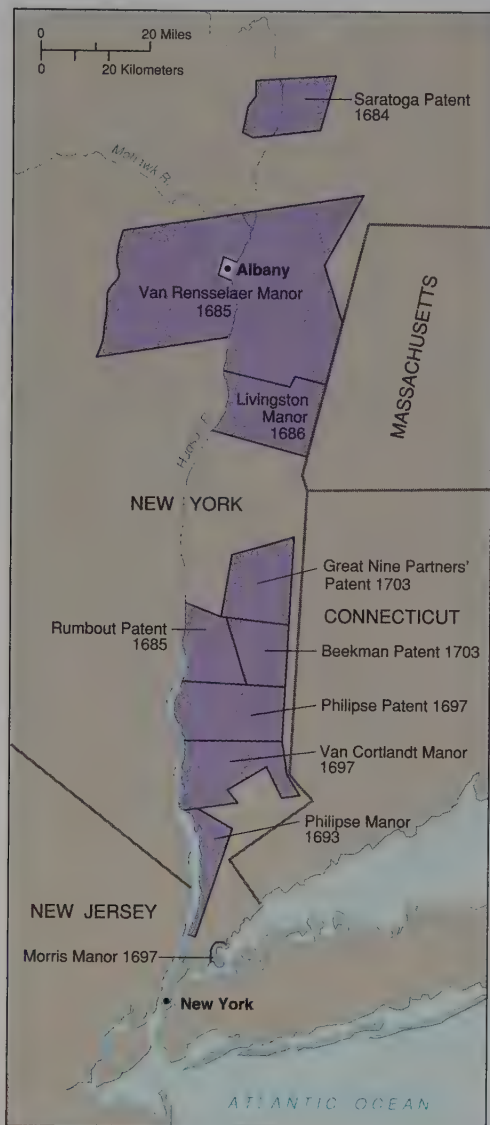
Privatization led to a rapid influx of guns into the hands of New Netherland's Iroquois allies, giving them a distinct advantage over other natives. As overhunting depleted local supplies of beaver skins and as smallpox epidemics took their toll, the Iroquois encroached on pro-French rival Indians in a quest for pelts and for captives, who could be adopted into Iroquois families to replace the dead. After 1648 the Iroquois, in a series of bloody "beaver wars," dispersed the Hurons and other French allies, incorporating many members of these nations into their own ranks. Then they attacked the French settlements along the St. Lawrence. "They come like foxes, they attack like lions, they disappear like birds," wrote a French Jesuit of the Iroquois.



### **The Riverine Colonies of New France, New Netherland, and New Sweden, c. 1650**

*So that they could easily buy furs trapped by Indians farther inland, England's imperial rivals located their colonies along major river routes to the interior. The French settled along the St. Lawrence, the Dutch along the Hudson, and the Swedes along the Delaware.*

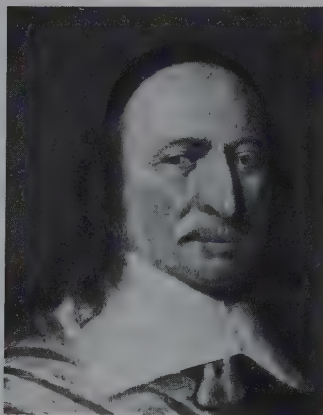
Although the Dutch allied successfully with the Iroquois, their relations with their nearer Indian neighbors were the worst of any Europeans. With its greedy settlers and military weakness, New Netherland had largely itself to blame. In 1643 all-out war erupted when Dutch forces massacred previously friendly Algonquian-speaking Indians and by 1645 the Dutch could temporarily prevail only with English help and by in-



**The New York Manors and Land Grants**  
Between 1684 and 1703, English governors awarded most of the best land east of the Hudson River as manors to prominent politicians—the majority of them Dutch—whose heirs became the wealthiest elite in the rural northern colonies.

flicting terrible atrocities. But the fighting had cut New Netherland's Indian population from 1,600 to 700.

Another European challenger dangerously distracted the Dutch in their war with the Algonquians. In 1638 Sweden had planted a small fur-trading colony in the lower Delaware Valley. Trading with the Delaware (or Lenni Lenape) Indians, New Sweden diverted many



**Peter Stuyvesant c. 1660**

*The last governor of New Netherland was handicapped by lack of support from Holland and an overbearing personality that alienated most people with whom he worked.*

furs from New Netherland. Annoyed, in 1655 the Dutch colony's governor, Peter Stuyvesant, marched his militia against New Sweden. The four hundred residents of the rival colony peacefully accepted Dutch annexation.

Tiny though they were, the Dutch and Swedish colonies were historically significant. New Netherland had attained a population of nine thousand and featured a wealthy, thriving port city by the time it came under English rule in 1664. Even short-lived New Sweden left a mark—the log cabin, that durable symbol of the American frontier, which Finnish settlers in the Swedish colony first introduced to the continent.

Above all, the two colonies bequeathed an environment characterized by ethnic and religious diversity that would continue in England's "middle colonies."

### **English Conquests: New York and the Jerseys**

Like Carolina, the English colonies of New York and New Jersey had their origins in the speculative enterprise of Restoration courtiers close to King Charles II. Here too upper-class proprietors hoped to create a hierarchical society in which they could profit from settlers' rents. These plans for the most part failed in New Jersey, as in Carolina. Only in New York did they come close to success.

In 1664, waging war against the Dutch Republic, Charles II dispatched a naval force to conquer New Netherland. Weakened by clashes with local Indians, Dutch governor Peter Stuyvesant and four hundred poorly armed civilians surrendered peacefully. Nearly all the Dutch (including Stuyvesant himself) remained in the colony on generous terms.

Charles II made his brother James, Duke of York, proprietor of the new province and renamed it New York. When the duke became King James II in 1685, he proclaimed New York a royal colony. Immigration from New England, Britain, and France boosted the popula-



tion from 9,000 in 1664 to 20,000 in 1700; just 44 percent were descended from the original New Netherlanders.

New York's governors rewarded their most influential political supporters, both Dutch and English, with large land grants. By 1703 five families held approximately 1.75 million acres (about half the area east of the Hudson River and south of Albany), which they withheld from sale in hope of creating manors with numerous rent-paying tenants. Earning an enormous income from their rents over the next half-century, the New York *patroons* (the Dutch name for manor lords) by 1750 formed a landed elite second in wealth only to the Carolina rice planters.

Ambitious plans likewise collided with American realities in New Jersey, which also was carved out of New Netherland. Immediately after the Dutch province's conquest in 1664, the Duke of York awarded New Jersey to a group of proprietors headed by William Penn, John Lord Berkeley, and Sir Philip Carteret. The area at the time was inhabited by about four thousand Delaware Indians and a few hundred Dutch and Swedes. From the beginning the New Jersey proprietors had difficulty controlling their province. By 1672 several thousand New Englanders had settled along the Atlantic shore. After the quarrelsome Puritans renounced allegiance to them, Berkeley and Carteret sold the region to a group of even more contentious religious dissenters, called Quakers, who split the territory into the two colonies of West Jersey (1676) and East Jersey (1682).

The Jerseys' Quakers, Anglicans, Puritans, Scottish Presbyterians, Dutch Calvinists, and Swedish Lutherans got along poorly with one another and even worse with the proprietors. The governments collapsed between 1698 and 1701 as mobs disrupted the courts. In 1702 the disillusioned proprietors finally surrendered their political powers to the crown, which proclaimed New Jersey a royal province.

### **Quaker Pennsylvania**

The noblest attempt to carry out European concepts of justice and stability in founding a colony began in 1681. That year Charles II paid off a huge debt by making a supporter's son, William Penn, the proprietor of the last unallocated tract of American territory at the king's disposal. Penn (1644–1718) had two aims in developing his colony. First, he was a Quaker and wanted to launch a “holy experiment” based on the teachings of the radical English preacher George Fox. Second, “though I de-

sire to extend religious freedom,” he explained, “yet I want some recompense for my trouble.”

Quakers in late-seventeenth-century England stood well beyond the fringe of respectability. Quakerism appealed strongly to men and women at the bottom of the economic ladder, and its adherents challenged the conventional foundation of the social order. George Fox, the movement's originator, had received his inspiration while wandering civil war–torn England's byways and searching for spiritual meaning among distressed common people. Tried on one occasion for blasphemy, he warned the judge to “tremble at the word of the Lord” and was ridiculed as a “quaker.” Fox's followers called themselves the Society of Friends, but the name Quaker stuck. They were among the most radical of the many religious sects born in England during the 1640s and 1650s.

The core of Fox's theology was his belief that the Holy Spirit or “Inner Light” could inspire every soul. Mainstream Christians, by contrast, found any such claim of special communication with God highly suspicious, as Anne Hutchinson's banishment from Massachusetts Bay colony in 1637 had revealed. Although trusting direct inspiration, Quakers also took great pains to ensure that individual opinions would not be mistaken for God's will. They felt confident that they understood Inner Light only after having reached near-unanimous agreement through intensive and searching discussion led by “Public Friends”—ordinary laypeople. In their simple religious services (“meetings”), Quakers sat silently until the Inner Light prompted one of them to speak.

Some of their beliefs led English Quakers to behave in ways that seemed disrespectful to government and the social elite and so aroused fierce hostility. For example, insisting that individuals deserved recognition for their spiritual state rather than their wealth or family status, Quakers refused to tip their hats to their social betters. For the same reason, they would not use the pronoun *you* (customarily employed when commoners spoke to members of the gentry), instead addressing everyone *thee* and *thou* as a token of equality. By wearing their hats in court, moreover, Quakers appeared to mock the state's authority; and by taking literally Scripture's ban on swearing oaths, they seemed to place themselves above the law. The Friends' refusal to bear arms appeared unpatriotic and cowardly to many. Finally, Quakers accorded women unprecedented equality. The Inner Light, Fox insisted, could “speak in the female as well as the male.” Acting on

these beliefs, Quakers suffered persecution, and occasionally death, in England, Massachusetts, and Virginia.

Not all Quakers came from the bottom of society. The movement's emphasis on quiet introspection and its refusal to adopt a formal creed also attracted some well-educated and well-to-do individuals disillusioned by the quarreling of rival faiths. The possessor of a great fortune, William Penn was hardly a typical Friend, but there were significant numbers of merchants among the estimated sixty thousand Quakers in the British Isles in the early 1680s. Moreover, the industriousness that the Society of Friends encouraged in its members ensured that many humble Quakers were already accumulating money and property.

Much care lay behind the Quaker migration to Pennsylvania that began in 1681, and it resulted in the most successful initial transplantation of Europeans in any North American colony. Penn sent an advance party to the Delaware Valley, where about five thousand Delaware Indians and one thousand Swedes and Dutch already lived. After an agonizing voyage in which one-third of the passengers died, Penn arrived in 1682. Choosing a site for the capital, he named it Philadelphia—the “City of Brotherly Love.” By 1687 some eight thousand settlers had joined Penn across the Atlantic. Most were Quakers from the British Isles, but they also included Presbyterians, Baptists, Anglicans, and Catholics, as well as Lutherans and radical sectarians from Germany—all attracted by Pennsylv-

nia's religious toleration. Because most Quakers immigrated in family groups rather than as single males, a high birthrate resulted, and the population grew rapidly. In 1698 one Quaker reported that in Pennsylvania one seldom met “any young Married Woman but hath a Child in her belly, or one upon her lap.”

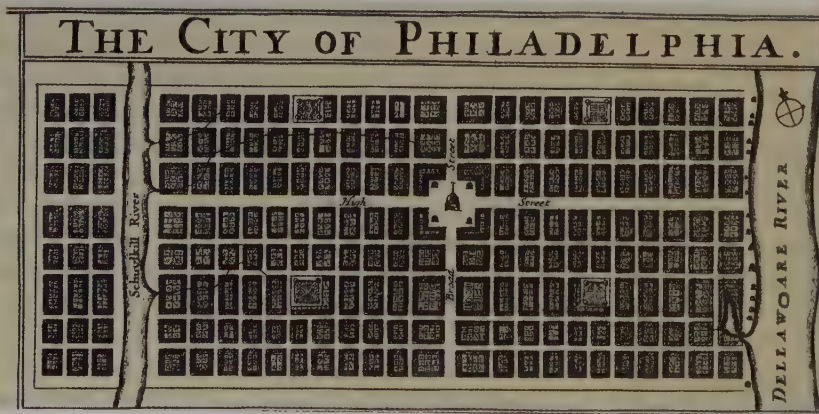
After wavering between authoritarian and more democratic plans, Penn finally gave Pennsylvania a government with a strong executive branch (a governor and governor's council) and granted the lower legislative chamber (the assembly) only limited powers. Friends, forming the majority of the colony's population, dominated this elected assembly. Penn named Quakers and their supporters as governor, judges, and sheriffs. Hardly a democrat, he feared “the ambitions of the populace which shakes the Constitution,” and he intended to check “the rabble” as much as possible. Because he also insisted on the orderly disposition of property and hoped to avoid unseemly wrangling, he carefully oversaw land sales in the colony. To prevent haphazard growth and social turmoil in Philadelphia, Penn designed the city with a grid plan, laying out the streets at right angles and reserving small areas for parks.

Good planning ensured that Pennsylvania suffered no initial starving time. The colony was also fortunate in experiencing no large-scale wars for seventy years. Partly this resulted from the reduced Native American population in the Delaware Valley. To the Indians, Penn

### William Penn's Map of Philadelphia, c. 1681

Central to William Penn's master plan for Philadelphia was the idea that each residence should stand in the middle of its plot, encircled by gardens and orchards.

This pastel portrait is thought to be the most accurate likeness of Penn extant.



Portrait of Penn,  
by Francis Place



expressed a wish “to live together as Neighbours and Friends,” and he tried to buy land fairly from them.

Pennsylvania seemed an ideal colony—intelligently organized, well financed, tolerant, open to all industrious settlers, and largely at peace with the Indians. Rich, level lands and a lengthy growing season produced bumper crops. Sharp West Indian demand for its grain quickly generated widespread prosperity and by 1700 made Philadelphia a major port.

But like other attempts to base new American societies on preconceived plans or lofty ideals, Penn’s “peaceable kingdom” soon bogged down in human bickering. In 1684 the founder returned to England and in his absence (until 1699) the settlers quarreled incessantly. An opposition party attacked Penn’s efforts to monopolize foreign trade and to make each landowner pay him a small annual fee. Bitter struggles between Penn’s supporters in the governor’s council and opponents in the assembly deadlocked the government. From 1686 to 1688, the legislature passed no laws and the council once ordered the lower house’s speaker arrested. Penn’s brief return to Pennsylvania from 1699 to 1701 helped little, but just before he sailed home, he made the legislature a unicameral (one-chamber) assembly and allowed it to initiate measures.

In addition, religious conflict shook Pennsylvania during the 1690s, when George Keith, a college-educated Public Friend, urged Quakers to adopt a formal creed. This would have changed the democratically functioning Quaker sect—in which the humblest member had equal authority in interpreting the Inner Light—into a more traditional church dominated by an educated clergy. The majority of Quakers rejected Keith’s views in 1692, whereupon he joined the Church of England, taking some Quakers with him. Keith’s departure began a major decline in the Quaker share of Pennsylvania’s population. The proportion fell further once Quakers ceased immigrating in large numbers after 1710.

William Penn met his strongest opposition in the counties on the lower Delaware River, where the best lands had been taken up by Swedes and Dutch. In 1704 these counties became the separate colony of Delaware, but Penn continued to name their governors.

The middle colonies soon demonstrated that British America could benefit by encouraging pluralism. New York and New Jersey successfully integrated New Netherland’s Swedish and Dutch population; and Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware refused to require

residents to pay support for any official church. Meanwhile, England’s European rivals, France and Spain, were also extending their claims in North America.

## Rivals for North America

In marked contrast to England’s compact settlements, France and Spain established far-flung inland networks of fortified trading posts and missions. To offset the English colonists’ superiority in numbers, France and Spain enlisted Native Americans as trading partners and military allies, and the two Catholic nations had far more success than English Protestants in converting Indians to Christianity. By 1720 missionaries, fur traders, soldiers, and merchants—and relatively few farmers and ranchers—had spread French and Spanish influence through two-thirds of the present-day United States.

England’s rivals exercised varying degrees of control in developing their American colonies. Louis XIV’s France, the supreme power in late-seventeenth-century Europe, poured in state resources, whereas Spain, then in deep decay, made little attempt to influence North American affairs from afar. In both cases, local officials and settlers assumed the primary burden for extending imperial control.

### *France Claims a Continent*

France’s King Louis XIV (reigned 1661–1715) sought to subordinate his American colony to French interests. His principal adviser, Jean-Baptiste Colbert, was a forceful proponent of the doctrine of *mercantilism* (see Chapter 4), according to which colonies should provide their home country with raw materials it lacked and with markets for its manufactured goods. In this way, the nation would not have to depend on rival countries for trade. Accordingly, Colbert and Louis hoped that New France could increase its output of furs, ship agricultural surpluses to France’s new sugar-producing colonies in the West Indies, and export timber for those colonies and for the French navy. To begin realizing these goals, they revoked the charter of the private New France Company in 1663 and placed the colony under royal direction. They then sought to stifle the Iroquois threat to New France’s economy and to encourage French immigration to Canada.

For more than half a century, and especially since the “beaver wars,” the Iroquois had limited New France’s productivity by intercepting convoys of beaver

1680

## Taos Pueblo, New Mexico

Since 1675 Native American leaders from many New Mexico pueblos had gathered regularly at Taos to plan the overthrow of Spanish rule. Hostile to the Spanish from the time of their arrival, Taos had become the center of a wider movement after Popé, a religious leader of San Juan Pueblo, fled there to avoid persecution by the Spanish.

In August 1680 Popé and his cohorts were ready to act. On the morning of August 10, some Taos Indians and

their Apache allies attacked the homes of the seventy Spanish colonists residing near Taos and killed all but two. Then, with Indians from neighboring pueblos, they proceeded south and joined a massive siege of New Mexico's capital, Santa Fe. Thus began the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, the most significant event in the history of the colonial Southwest.

Taos's leading role in the revolt is not surprising, for it had long been a meetingplace for Native Americans from near and far and a center of anti-Spanish resistance. Before the Spanish arrived, Taos was a major center of trade between the farming Pueblo Indians and the buffalo-hunting Apaches to the north and east. An early Spanish expedition reported some Apaches returning from Taos, "where they sell meat, hides, tallow, suet, and salt in exchange for cotton, blankets, pottery, maize, and some small green stones [turquoise]."

After establishing New Mexico in 1598, the Spanish collected corn as tribute from the pueblos. As a result, Pueblo Indians could no longer send their surplus crops to Taos and other trade centers for exchange with the Apaches. Having come to depend on corn, Apaches now raided pueblos for the grain. When Taos resisted colonial rule in 1602, Spanish troops waged a punitive raid on the pueblo. Four years later, Taos, two other trade centers, and several Apache bands urged the other pueblos to join them in overthrowing the Spanish. But most of the pueblos, fearing the Apaches, responded by strengthening their ties to the Spanish.

For the next seven decades, the Taos Indians struggled to retain their independence from the Spanish. On two occasions they destroyed Franciscan missions in their pueblo, only to watch as the churches were rebuilt under the protection of Spanish soldiers. The Taos also maintained their ties with the Apaches. In 1640 some Taos fled to live near friendly Apaches in Kansas, where they remained until Spanish troops forcibly returned them home in 1662. Meanwhile, the Spanish raided Taos and another pueblo where some Apaches lived, slaying all Apache men and enslaving Apache women and children.

For more than half a century, most of the other pueblos tried to accommodate Spanish rule and Catholicism. But during the 1660s they grew disillusioned. For several consecutive years their crops withered under the effects of sustained drought. Drought-induced starvation plus deadly epidemic diseases sent their population plummeting from about 80,000 in 1598 to just 17,000 in the 1670s. Riding horses stolen from the Spanish, Apaches inflicted more damage than ever in their raids. Reeling under the effects of these catastrophes, Christian Indians returned to traditional Pueblo beliefs and ceremonies in hopes of restoring the spiritual balance that had brought ample rainfall, good health, and peace before the Spanish arrived. Seeking to suppress Pueblo religion as "witchcraft" and "idolatry," missionaries entered sacred, underground kivas, destroyed religious objects, and publicly whipped native religious leaders and their followers.

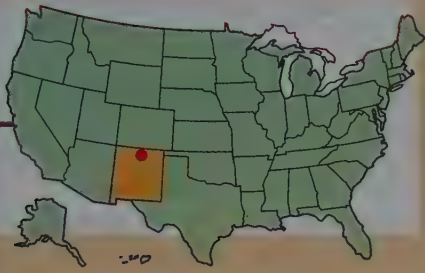
Matters came to a head in 1675 when Governor Juan Francisco Treviño ordered soldiers to sack the kivas and to arrest the religious leaders. Three leaders were sent to the gallows, a

**Diego de Vargas**

*Leader of the Spanish reconquest of New Mexico.*







fourth hanged himself, and forty-three others—including Popé—were jailed, whipped, and sentenced to be sold as slaves. In response, armed warriors from several pueblos converged on Santa Fe and demanded the prisoners' release. With most of his soldiers off fighting the Apaches, Governor Treviño complied.

Despite this concession, there was now no cooling of Pueblo resentment against the Spanish. Besides Popé and his Taos host, El Saca, the leaders gathered at Taos included Luis Tupatú, Antonio Malacate, and others whose Christian names signified that earlier they had been baptized. Some were of mixed Pueblo-Spanish ancestry, and

one leader, Domingo Naranjo, combined Pueblo, Mexican Indian, and African ancestors. They and many of their followers had attempted to reconcile conversion to Christianity and subjection to Spanish rule with their identities as Indians. But the natives' deteriorating conditions and the cruel intolerance of the Spanish turned them against Catholicism. At each pueblo, rebels destroyed the churches and religious paraphernalia and killed those missionaries who did not escape. Then they "plunge[d] into the rivers and wash[ed] themselves with amole," a native root, in order to undo their baptisms. As a follower later testified, Popé also called on the Indians "to break and enlarge their cultivated fields, saying now they were as they had been in ancient times, free from the labor they had performed for the religious and the Spaniards." In rejecting Christianity and the Spanish, Pueblo Indians from throughout New Mexico did what many Taos had urged them to do for decades.

The siege of Santa Fe led to the expulsion of the Spanish from New Mexico for twelve years. By the time Diego de Vargas, leading the Spanish reconquest, reached Taos in September 1692, most pueblos had already resubmitted to Spanish rule. Suspicious as always of Spanish intentions, the Taos retreated to the mountains until Vargas consented to pardon them. Once returned to their community, ninety-six of them agreed to be baptized, and two leaders told Vargas of a new plot against him. Nevertheless, many Taos people continued to resent the Spanish, and in 1696 they joined Indians from several other villages in an abortive uprising. Thereafter suspicions of the Spanish lingered, but Taos did not again attempt to overthrow them. Like recently defeated Indians in New England and the Chesapeake, they sought thereafter to survive and to sustain their cultural identities within, rather than outside, the bounds of colonial rule.

### Taos Pueblo, North House Block, 1880





### View of Quebec, 1699

*New France's security was built on its rising commercial economy and its close ties to Canada's Indians.*

pelts from the interior. After assuming control of the colony, the royal government sent fifteen hundred soldiers to stop Iroquois interference with the French fur trade. In 1666 these troops sacked and burned four Mohawk villages well stocked with winter food. After the Iroquois Confederacy made a peace that lasted until 1680, New France enormously expanded its North American fur exports.

Meanwhile, the French crown energetically built up New France's population. Within a decade of the royal takeover, the number of colonists rose from 2,500 to 8,500. The vast majority were indentured servants who were paid wages and given land after three years' work. Others were former soldiers and their officers, who were encouraged to remain in New France and farm while strengthening the colony's defenses. The officers were encouraged to marry among the "king's girls," female orphans shipped over with dowries.

The upsurge in French immigration petered out after 1673. Tales of disease and other hazards of the transatlantic voyage, of Canada's hard winters, and of

wars with the "savage" Iroquois were spread by the two-thirds of French immigrants who returned to their native land over the next century. New France would grow slowly, relying on the natural increase of its small population rather than on newcomers from Europe.

Colbert had encouraged immigration in order to enhance New France's agricultural productivity. But many men who remained spurned farming in the St. Lawrence Valley, instead swarming westward in search of furs. By 1670 one-fifth of them were *coureurs de bois*—independent traders unconstrained by government authority or dubious pasts. Living and intermarrying with Indians, the *coureurs* built for France an empire based on alliances with Canadian and Great Lakes Indians from whom the French obtained furs in exchange for European goods, including guns to use against the Iroquois and other rivals.

Alarmed by the rapid expansion of England's colonies and by Spanish plans to link Florida with New Mexico, France boldly sought to dominate the North American heartland. As early as 1672, fur trader Louis Jolliet and Jesuit missionary Jacques Marquette became the first Europeans known to have reached the upper Mississippi River (near modern Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin); they later paddled twelve hundred miles downstream, to the Mississippi's junction with the Arkansas River. Ten years later, the Sieur de La Salle, an ambitious upper-class adventurer, descended the entire Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico. When he reached the delta, La Salle formally claimed all the Mississippi basin—half the territory of the present-day continental United States—for Louis XIV, in whose honor he named the territory Louisiana.

Having asserted title to this vast empire, the French began settling the southern gateway into it. In 1698 the first colonizers arrived near the mouth of the Mississippi. A year later, the French erected a fort near present-day Biloxi, Mississippi. In 1702 they occupied what is now Mobile, Alabama, as a fur-trading station.

### *The Spanish Borderlands*

English and French expansion did not go unnoticed by the Spanish. They grew alarmed when La Salle temporarily occupied an outpost near modern-day Houston from 1685 to 1687. To defend their border holdings, Spanish authorities in Mexico proclaimed the province of Texas (Tejas) in 1691. But no permanent Spanish settlements appeared there until 1716 (see Chapter 4).



Spanish preoccupation with New Mexico was a primary reason for this neglect of Texas. By 1680 about 2,300 Europeans—many of them scattered on isolated *ranchos* (ranches)—and 17,000 Pueblo Indians lived in New Mexico's Rio Grande Valley, compared with 80,000 natives in 1598 when the Spanish arrived. That year a Pueblo religious leader named Popé led a revolt, culminating nearly a century of grievances and sparked by Spanish efforts to outlaw the rituals central to the Pueblo peoples' way of life (see *A Place in Time*). The Indians killed 400 colonists (including most priests), captured Santa Fe, and drove the survivors south to El Paso. The Pueblo peoples held New Mexico until 1692, and their resistance continued to threaten Spanish rule until the end of the century.

In Florida, an even older colony than New Mexico, the Spanish fared no better. Before 1680 the colony faced periodic rebellions from Gualte, Timucua, and Apalachee Indians protesting forced labor and the religious discipline imposed by Franciscan missionaries. Beginning in the 1680s, Creek and other slave raiders allied to Carolina added to the effects of recurrent diseases in reducing the number of Indians in Florida. When a new round of warfare erupted in Europe at the end of the decade, Spain was ill prepared to defend its beleaguered North American colonies.

## CONCLUSION

In less than a century, from 1630 to 1700, the far-flung dispersals of European, African, and Native American peoples transformed the map of North America. The kin of Sarah Horbin, Mary Johnson, and others had spread far and wide among colonial regions in the Americas. Native Americans in communities like Taos either reconciled themselves to one or another form of coexistence with European colonizers or left their homelands in order to avoid contact with the intruders. Among the colonizing powers, England was by far the most successful. By 1700 the population of its North American colonies was about 250,000, compared with 15,000 for the French holdings and 4,500 for the Spanish.

Within the English colonies, what had begun as four distinct regions was becoming only two. After beginning with a labor force consisting primarily of white indentured servants, the tobacco planters of the Chesapeake followed their counterparts in the West Indies

and Carolina by turning to enslaved Africans. In the process, the Chesapeake and Carolina came to constitute a single, southern region dominated by planter-slaveowners and containing the vast majority of North America's slaves. To the north, New England's Puritanism had grown less utopian and more worldly as the inhabitants gradually reconciled their religious views with the realities of a commercial economy. In between New England and the South, the middle colonies, with their ethnic and religious pluralism, embraced the market economy with less hesitation. Despite continued differences between them, New England and the middle colonies were merging into a single, northern region oriented toward commerce and dominated by merchants. Yet while planters and merchants rose to prominence, most whites in both south and north continued to live on family farms. During the first half of the eighteenth century, these rapidly expanding colonial regions would be effectively integrated into the first empire in history rooted in commercial capitalism.

## — FOR FURTHER READING —

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- David J. Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America* (1992). A masterful synthesis of Spanish colonial history north of the Caribbean and Mexico.
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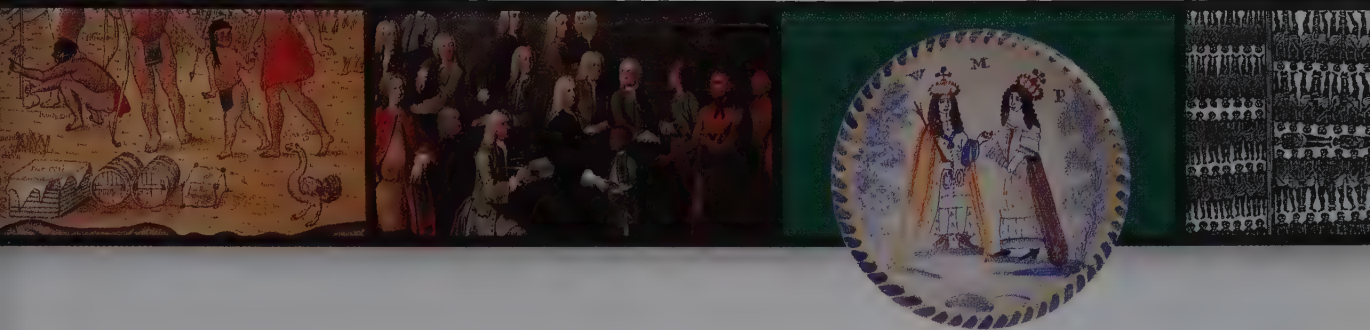
# 4

## The Bonds of Empire 1660–1750



Mrs. Harme Gansevoort (Magdalena Bouw) by Pieter Vanderlyn, c. 1740





Alexander Garden was furious with the young Anglican minister George Whitefield (page 82). Just over from England, Whitefield was asserting publicly that Garden's ministers were unsaved and endangering their parishioners' souls. Garden, as the bishop of London's commissary (representative) in Charles Town, South Carolina, was responsible for the Church of England's well-being in the southern British colonies. Resenting this challenge to his authority, Garden summoned Whitefield and demanded a retraction. But he got more than he bargained for. Whitefield claimed that Garden "was as ignorant as the rest" of the local clergy because he failed to teach the central Calvinist doctrine of salvation by predestination (see Chapter 2). And Whitefield threatened to widen his attacks if Garden refused to condemn dancing and other "sinful" entertainments. Garden shot back that Whitefield would be suspended if he preached in any church in the province—to which Whitefield retorted that he would treat such an action as he would an order from the pope. The meeting ended with Garden shouting, "Get out of my house!"

Garden got Whitefield out of his house but not out of his hair. The two men carried their dispute to the public. Garden accused Whitefield of jeopardizing the stability of colonial society. Whitefield charged the Anglican clergy with abandoning piety in favor of the cold heresy of reason. An extraordinary orator, Whitefield stirred his listeners' passions, calling forth an "enthusiasm" for religion that undermined traditional order and deference. He inspired members of congregations to think themselves as good as, if not superior to, their ministers; wives, to question their husbands' piety; children, to claim divine grace that their parents did not feel; and common people, including slaves and subjugated Indians, to insist that they were the equal of anyone else.

That was Whitefield's greatest crime—to be heard throughout America. He became the first intercolonial celebrity in North America, traveling thousands of miles to spread his critique of the established religious order. Everywhere he went, the people poured out by the thousands to listen and feel, to sense individually the overwhelming power of a direct connection with God.

Whitefield represented one of two European cultural currents that crossed the Atlantic during the middle decades of the eighteenth century. Indeed the preacher was the greatest English-speaking prophet of a powerful revival of religious piety sweeping the Protestant world. The second current was the Enlightenment—the dissemination among the educated public of faith in reason rooted in an appreciation of natural science—which found its foremost American exponent in Benjamin Franklin. Franklin's emphasis on reason might seem at odds with Whitefield's conscious efforts to tap his audience's deepest emotions. But both men repudiated the relatively self-contained hierarchical communities of the past in favor of a more dynamic society that was intercolonial and transatlantic in its orientation.

Sweeping through British North America in the 1740s, Whitefield encountered a vibrant society, a rapidly growing economy, and the beginnings of a richly diverse culture. By 1750 the colonies could claim the world's largest concentration of overseas Europeans; besides those with English backgrounds, significant numbers descended from Welsh, German, Irish, Scottish, Dutch, and French settlers. North America was also the enforced home of a burgeoning African population, by now slowly becoming both English-speaking and Christian. And everywhere the pace of colonial expansion was blurring once-distinct boundaries separating Native Americans from colonists.



### George Whitefield

*By the mid-eighteenth century, the Protestant revivalist from England was the most prominent figure in the British colonies.*

The peace and prosperity that characterized mid-eighteenth-century British North America would have astonished seventeenth-century colonists, clinging to their uncertain footholds on the edge of the wilderness. But even though by 1740 life was becoming reasonably stable and secure, especially for upper-class Anglo-Americans, the Great Awakening let loose spiritual and social tremors that jolted colonial self-confidence. Alexander Garden's nervousness was hardly unreasonable.

This chapter will focus on four major questions:

- ◆ Why were France and Spain unable to match Britain's imperial success in mainland North America during the first half of the eighteenth century?
- ◆ What were the advantages and disadvantages of British mercantilism for the mainland colonies?
- ◆ In what ways was the racial and ethnic composition of North America transformed during the first half of the eighteenth century? What were the principal causes of these changes?
- ◆ What were the most fundamental differences between the Enlightenment and the Great Awakening? What, if anything, did the two movements have in common?

## Rebellion and War

Although the English had established colonies as early as 1607, with the founding of Jamestown, Virginia, England made no serious effort to weld its colonies into a coherent empire until King Charles II (ruled 1660–1685) assumed the throne. Charles's ascension, marking the “restoration” of the Stuart monarchy in England, ended two decades of civil war and experimentation with republican rule. Almost immediately, English authorities undertook a concerted policy that sought to expand the nation's overseas trade at the ex-

pense of its rivals and to subordinate its colonies to English commercial interests and political authority. Efforts to tighten royal control over the colonies ended in 1689 after the “Glorious Revolution” in England forced King James II into exile.

### Royal Centralization

As the sons of a king (Charles I) executed by Parliament, the last two Stuart monarchs disliked representative government. Charles II called Parliament into session rarely after 1674, and not at all from 1681 until his death in 1685. James II (ruled 1685–1688) hoped to reign as an “absolute” monarch like France's Louis XIV, who never had to face a national parliament. Not surprisingly, neither English king had much sympathy for the American colonial assemblies.

### The Restoration Colonies

*England's Restoration colonies were carved out of the claims or earlier colonial territories of rival European powers. Spain claimed the territory chartered as Carolina in 1663. Out of England's takeover of Dutch New Netherland in 1664 came the colonies of New York, New Jersey, West Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware.*





## CHRONOLOGY

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>1651–1733</b> Parliament enacts the Navigation Acts to regulate British imperial commerce.  | <b>1690</b> John Locke, <i>Essay Concerning Human Understanding</i> .   | <b>1735</b> Jonathan Edwards leads revival in Northampton, Massachusetts.                |
| <b>1660</b> Restoration of the Stuart dynasty to English throne.   | <b>1698</b> French begin settlements near the mouth of the Mississippi River.                                 | <b>1737</b> Walking Purchase of Delaware Indians in Pennsylvania.                        |
| <b>1685</b> Duke of York becomes King James II of England.   | <b>1701</b> Iroquois adopt neutrality policy toward European powers.  | <b>1739</b> Great Awakening begins with George Whitefield's arrival in British colonies. |
| <b>1686–1689</b> Dominion of New England.  | <b>1702–1713</b> Queen Anne's War (in Europe, War of the Spanish Succession).                                 | Stono Rebellion in South Carolina.   |
| <b>1688</b> Glorious Revolution in England; James II deposed.  | <b>1716</b> San Antonio de Béxar founded.   | <b>1739–1744</b> Anglo-Spanish War.  |
| <b>1689</b> William and Mary ascend to English throne.<br>Protestant Association seizes power in Maryland.<br>Leisler's Rebellion in New York. | <b>1718</b> New Orleans founded.  | <b>1743</b> Benjamin Franklin founds American Philosophical Society.                     |
| <b>1689–1697</b> King William's War (in Europe, War of the League of Augsburg).  | <b>1729–1730</b> French war on Natchez Indians in Louisiana.  | <b>1750</b> Slavery legalized in Georgia.  |
|  | <b>1732</b> Georgia colony chartered.<br>Benjamin Franklin begins publishing <i>Poor Richard's Almanack</i> . |  |

Royal intentions of extending direct political control to North America first became evident in New York. The proprietor, Charles II's brother James, the Duke of York, considered elected assemblies "of dangerous consequence" and until 1682 forbade them to meet. He relented from 1682 to 1686 but thereafter called none. Meanwhile, Charles appointed former army officers to about 90 percent of all gubernatorial positions, thereby compromising the time-honored English tradition of holding the military strictly accountable to civilian authority. By 1680 such "governors general" ruled 60 percent of all American colonists. James II later continued this policy.

Ever resentful of outside meddling, New Englanders proved most stubborn in defending self-government and resisting Stuart policies. As early as 1661, the Massachusetts assembly politely but firmly declared its citizens exempt from all laws and royal decrees from England except for a declaration of war. The colony ignored the Navigation Acts and continued welcoming Dutch traders. Charles II responded by targeting Massachusetts for special punishment. In 1679 he carved out of its territory a new royal colony, New Hampshire. Then in 1684 he declared Massachusetts itself a royal

colony and revoked its charter, the very foundation of the Puritan city upon a hill. Puritan minister Increase Mather repudiated the King's actions, calling on colonists to resist even to the point of martyrdom.

Royal centralization in America culminated after James II ascended to the throne. In 1686 the new king consolidated Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Plymouth into a single administrative unit, the Dominion of New England. He added New York and the Jerseys in 1688. With this bold stroke, all legislatures in these colonies ceased to exist, and still another former army officer, Sir Edmund Andros, became the governor of the Dominion of New England, at Boston.

Massachusetts burned with hatred for the new governor. By "Exercise of an arbitrary Government," preached Salem's minister, "ye wicked walked on Every Side & ye Vilest of men ware [sic] exalted." Andros was indeed arbitrary. He suppressed the legislature, limited towns to a single annual meeting, and strictly enforced toleration of Anglicans and the Navigation Acts. "You have no more privileges left you," Andros reportedly told a group of outraged colonists, "than not to be sold for slaves." Other than his soldiers

and a handful of recently arrived Anglican immigrants, however, Andros had no base of support in Massachusetts.

Tensions also ran high in New York, where Catholics held high political and military posts under the Duke of York's rule. By 1688 citizens feared that these Catholic officials would betray the colony to France. When Andros's local deputy, Captain Francis Nicholson, allowed the harbor's forts to deteriorate and reacted skeptically to rumors of Indian hostility, New Yorkers suspected the worst.

### ***The Glorious Revolution in England and America***

New England Puritans' fury at Andros's forcing them to tolerate Anglicanism was matched by English Protestants' growing worries about the Stuarts' predilection for Catholicism. The Duke of York became a Catholic in 1676, and Charles II converted on his deathbed. Both rulers violated Parliament's laws by issuing decrees that allowed Catholics to hold high office and worship openly. English Protestants' fears that they would have to accept Catholicism intensified after both kings expressed their preference for allying with France just as Louis XIV was launching new persecutions of that country's Protestant Huguenots in 1685.

The English tolerated James II's Catholicism only because his heirs, his daughters Mary and Anne, had re-

mained Anglican. Then in 1688 James's wife bore a son, who would be raised—and might someday reign—as a Catholic. Aghast at the thought of a Catholic successor to the monarchy, some English politicians asked Mary and her husband, William of Orange (head of the Dutch Republic) to intervene. When William and Mary led a small army to England in November 1688, most royal troops defected to them, and James II fled to France.

This bloodless revolution of 1688, also called the Glorious Revolution, created a "limited monarchy" as defined by England's Bill of Rights of 1689. The crown promised to summon Parliament annually, sign all its bills, and respect traditional civil liberties. The Glorious Revolution's vindication of limited representative government burned deeply into the English political consciousness, and Anglo-Americans never forgot it. Colonists struck their own blows for liberty when Massachusetts, New York, and Maryland all rose up against local representatives of the Stuart regime.

News that England's Protestant leaders had rebelled against James II electrified New Englanders. On April 18, 1689, well before confirmation of the English revolt's success, Boston's militia arrested Andros and his councilors. (The governor tried to flee in women's clothing but was caught after an alert guard spotted a "lady" in army boots.) Massachusetts' political leaders acted in the name of William and Mary, risking their necks should James return to power in England.

William and Mary gave official consent to dismantling the Dominion of New England and restored to the citizens of Connecticut and Rhode Island the right of electing their own governors. However, they acted to reduce Massachusetts' power and influence. While allowing the province to absorb Plymouth and Maine, they refused to let it regain New Hampshire. More seriously, the new royal charter of 1691 reserved to the crown the right of appointing the governor. In addition, property ownership, not church membership, became the criterion for voting. Finally, the Puritan colony had to tolerate Anglicans, who were proliferating in the port towns. In a society trembling at divine displeasure over its ungodliness (see Chapter 3), this was indeed bitter medicine to swallow.

New York's counterpart of the anti-Stuart uprising was Leisler's Rebellion. Emboldened by news of Boston's coup, the city's militia—consisting mainly of Dutch and other non-English artisans and shopkeepers—seized the harbor's main fort on May 31, 1689. Captain Jacob Leisler of the militia took over com-

#### **King William and Queen Mary**

*This plate, made in England in about 1700, depicts the monarchs who assumed the throne after the Glorious Revolution.*





mand of the colony, repaired its rundown defenses, and called elections for an assembly. When English troops arrived at New York in 1691, Leisler denied them entry to key forts for fear that their commander was loyal to James II. A skirmish resulted, and Leisler was arrested.

"Hott brain'd" Leisler unwittingly had set his own downfall in motion. He had jailed many elite New Yorkers for questioning his authority, only to find that his former enemies had gained the new governor's ear and persuaded him to charge Leisler with treason for firing on royal troops. In the face of popular outrage, a packed jury found Leisler and his son-in-law, Jacob Milborne, guilty. Both men went to the gallows insisting that they were dying "for the king and queen and the Protestant religion."

News of England's Glorious Revolution heartened Maryland's Protestant majority, which had long chafed under Catholic rule. Hoping to prevent a repetition of religion-tinged uprisings that had flared in 1676 and 1681, Lord Baltimore sent a messenger from England in early 1689 to command Maryland's obedience to William and Mary. But the courier died en route, leaving the colony's unknowing Protestants in fear that their Catholic proprietor was a traitor who supported James II.

Soon John Coode and three others organized the Protestant Association to secure Maryland for William and Mary. These conspirators seem to have been motivated far more by their exclusion from high public office than by religious zeal, for three of the four had Catholic wives. Coode's group seized the capital in July 1689, removed all Catholics from office, and requested that the crown take over the colony. They got their wish. Maryland became a royal province in 1691, and in 1692 it made the Church of England the established religion. Catholics, who composed less than one-fourth of the population, lost the right to vote and thereafter could worship only in private. Maryland stayed in royal hands until 1715, when the fourth Lord Baltimore joined the Church of England and regained his proprietorship.

The revolutionary events of 1688–1689 decisively changed the colonies' political climate by reestablishing legislative government and ensuring religious freedom for Protestants. Dismantling the Dominion of New England and directing governors to call annual assemblies, William and Mary allowed colonial elites to reassert control over local affairs and encouraged American political leaders to identify their interests with

England. A foundation was thus laid for an empire based on voluntary allegiance rather than submission to raw power imposed from faraway London. The crowning of William and Mary opened a new era in which Americans drew rising confidence from their relationship to the English throne. "As long as they reign," wrote a Bostonian who helped topple Andros, "New England is secure."

### *A Generation of War*

The bloodless Revolution of 1688 ironically ushered in a quarter-century of warfare that convulsed both Europe and the colonies. In 1689 England joined a general European coalition against France's Louis XIV, who supported James II's claim to the English crown. The resulting War of the League of Augsburg (which Anglo-Americans called King William's War) was the first struggle to embroil the colonies in European rivalries.

With the outbreak of King William's War, New Yorkers and Yankees launched a two-pronged invasion of New France in 1690, with one prong aimed at Montreal and the second at Quebec. After both invasions failed, the war took the form of cruel but inconclusive border raids against civilians, carried out by both English and French troops and their Indian allies.

Already weary from a new wave of wars with pro-French Indians in the Ohio Valley, the Five Nations of the Iroquois bore the bloodiest fighting in King William's War. Standing almost alone against their foes, the Five Nations faced overwhelming odds. Not only did their English allies meet with little success intercepting enemy war parties, but the French had enlisted virtually all other Indians from Maine to the Great Lakes as combatants. In 1691 every Mohawk and Oneida war chief died in battle; by 1696 French armies had destroyed the villages of every Iroquois nation but the Cayugas and Oneidas.

Although the Anglo-French war ended in 1697, the Iroquois staggered under Algonquian invasions until 1700. By then one-quarter of the Five Nations' 2,000 warriors had been killed or taken prisoner, or had fled to Canada. The total Iroquois population declined 20 percent over twelve years, from 8,600 to 7,000. (By comparison, about 1,300 English, Dutch, and French died during the same period.)

By 1700 Iroquois society was divided into three factions—pro-English, pro-French, and neutralists. Under the impact of war, the neutralists succeeded in defining a new direction for Iroquois diplomacy. In the "Grand

Settlement” of 1701, the Five Nations of the Iroquois made peace with France and its Indian allies in exchange for access to western furs while redefining their British alliance to exclude military cooperation. Skillful negotiations brought the exhausted Iroquois far more success than had war by allowing them to keep control of their lands, rebuild their decimated population, and gain recognition as keys to the balance of power in the Northeast.

In 1702 European war again erupted when England fought France and Spain in the War of the Spanish Succession, called Queen Anne’s War by England’s American colonists. This conflict reinforced Anglo-Americans’ awareness of their military weakness. French and Indian raiders from Canada destroyed several towns in Massachusetts and Maine. The Spanish invaded southern Carolina and nearly took Charles Town in 1706. Enemy warships captured many colonial vessels and landed looting parties along the Atlantic coast. Meanwhile, colonial sieges of Quebec and St. Augustine ended as expensive failures.

English forces had more success than those of the colonies, seizing the Hudson Bay region, as well as Newfoundland and Acadia (henceforth called Nova Scotia). Although Great Britain kept these gains in the peace of 1713, the French and Indian hold on the continent’s interior remained unbroken.

The most important consequence of the colonial wars for Anglo-Americans was political, not military. The wars instilled in them a profound sense of dependence on the newly formed United Kingdom of Great Britain (created by the formal union of England and Scotland in 1707). The clashes with France vividly reminded the colonists of the loyalty they owed William and Mary for ousting James II, who many believed would have persecuted Protestants and ruled despotically. Anglo-Americans also came to recognize their own military weakness and the extent to which their shipping needed the Royal Navy’s protection. Even as a new generation of English colonists matured, war was thus reinforcing their sense of British identity by buttressing their loyalty to the crown.

## Colonial Economies and Societies

The achievement of peace in 1713 enabled the European powers to concentrate on competing economically rather than militarily. For the next three decades the two principal powers, Britain and France, sought to enhance their advantages over each other by integrat-

ing their American colonies into single imperial economies. Spain pursued a similar course but was hampered by small wars with both its rivals and by a structurally weakened economy.

### *Mercantilist Empires in America*

The policies followed by Britain, France, and Spain were all rooted in a set of political-economic assumptions known as *mercantilism*. Mercantilism was not a carefully elaborated economic theory. Rather, the word refers to a set of policies aimed at guaranteeing prosperity by making a nation as self-sufficient as possible—by eliminating dependence on foreign suppliers, damaging foreign competitors’ commercial interests, and increasing its nation’s net stock of gold and silver by selling more abroad than buying. Mercantilist policies generally had the additional effect of favoring special interests such as chartered companies and merchants’ guilds. Mercantilism would not be effectively challenged until Adam Smith’s *The Wealth of Nations*, published in 1776, argued for a competitive free-market system.

Britain’s mercantilist policies were articulated above all in a series of “Navigation Acts” governing commerce between Britain and its overseas colonies. Parliament enacted the first Navigation Act in 1651 to undercut the Dutch Republic’s economic preponderance. After the Stuart restoration, Parliament enacted the Navigation Acts of 1660 and 1663, barring colonial merchants from exporting such commodities as sugar and tobacco anywhere except to England, and from importing goods in non-English ships. An act of 1672 provided administrative machinery to enforce these rules. Finally, the Molasses Act of 1733 taxed all foreign molasses (a liquid drained from sugar plants and used to distill rum) from entering the mainland colonies at sixpence per gallon. This act was intended less to raise revenue than to serve as a protective tariff that would benefit British West Indian sugar producers at the expense of their French rivals. By 1750 a long series of Navigation Acts were in force, affecting the colonial economy in four major ways.

First, the laws limited all imperial trade to *British* ships, defined as those with British ownership and whose crews were three-quarters British. For purposes of this legislation, Parliament classified all colonists, including slaves, as British. This restriction not only contributed to Great Britain’s rise as Europe’s foremost shipping nation but also laid the foundations for an American shipbuilding industry



and merchant marine. By the 1750s one-third of all imperial vessels were American-owned, mostly by merchants in New England and the middle colonies. The swift growth of this merchant marine diversified the northern colonial economy and made it more self-sufficient. The expansion of colonial shipping in turn hastened urbanization by creating a need for centralized docks, warehouses, and repair shops in the colonies. By 1770 Philadelphia and New York City had emerged as two of the British Empire's busiest ports.

The second major way in which the Navigation Acts affected the colonies lay in their barring the export of certain "enumerated goods" to foreign nations unless these items first passed through England or Scotland. The mainland's chief "controlled" items were tobacco, rice, furs, indigo (a Carolina plant that produced a blue dye), and naval stores (masts, hemp, tar, and turpentine). Parliament never restricted grain, livestock, fish, lumber, or rum, which altogether made up 60 percent of colonial exports. Furthermore, Anglo-American exporters of tobacco and rice—the chief commodities affected by enumeration—had their burdens reduced by two significant concessions. First, Parliament gave tobacco growers a monopoly over the British market by excluding foreign tobacco, even though this hurt British consumers. (Rice planters enjoyed a natural monopoly because they had no competitors.) Second, Parliament tried to minimize the added cost of landing tobacco and rice in Britain (where customs officials collected duties on both) by refunding these duties on all tobacco and rice that the colonists later shipped to other countries. About 85 percent of all American tobacco and rice was eventually reexported and sold outside the British Empire.

The navigation system's third impact on the colonies was to encourage economic diversification. Parliament used British tax money to pay modest bounties to Americans producing such items as silk, iron, dyes, hemp, and lumber, which Britain would otherwise have had to import from other countries, and it raised the price of commercial rivals' imports by imposing protective tariffs on them. The trade laws did prohibit Anglo-Americans from competing with *large-scale* British manufacturing of certain products, most notably clothing. However, colonial tailors, hatters, and housewives could continue to make any item of dress in their households or small shops. Manufactured by low-paid labor, British clothing imports generally undersold whatever the colonists could have produced given their higher labor costs. The colonists were also free to produce iron, and by 1770 they had built 250 ironworks employing thirty thousand men, a work force larger than the entire population of Georgia or of any provincial city.

Finally, the Navigation Acts made the colonies a protected market for low-priced consumer goods and other exports from Britain. Steady overseas demand for colonial products spawned a prosperity that enabled white colonists to consume ever larger amounts not only of clothing but of dishware, home furnishings, tea, and a range of other items both produced in Britain and imported by British and colonial merchants from elsewhere. Consequently, the share of British exports sold to the colonies spurted from just 5 percent in 1700 to almost 40 percent by 1760. Cheap imported goods enabled many colonists to adopt a lifestyle similar to that of middle-class Britons. "You may depend upon it," remarked Pennsylvanian William Allen, "this is one of the best poor man's countries in the world."

## Philadelphia

*Founded just four decades earlier, Philadelphia was already one of British America's largest and wealthiest cities.*



Although some colonists complained about the navigation system in the late seventeenth century, few did so between 1700 and 1760. The trade regulation primarily burdened tobacco and rice exporters, whose income nevertheless was reduced by less than 3 percent. The commercial laws did increase the cost of non-British merchandise imported into the colonies, but seldom by enough to encourage smuggling (except in the case of tea from India and molasses from the French Caribbean).

Although Parliament intended the laws to benefit only Britain, the colonies also benefited. British North America's economy grew at a per capita rate of 0.6 percent annually from 1650 to 1770, a pace twice that of Great Britain.

The economic development of the French and Spanish colonies paled beside that of British North America. Although France's Jean-Baptiste Colbert (see Chapter 3) was the most forceful proponent of mercantilism, he and his successors had great difficulty implementing mercantilist policies. New France gradually developed agricultural self-sufficiency and, in good years, exported some of its wheat to France's West Indian colonies. It also exported small amounts of fish and timber to the Caribbean and to France. The colony's chief imports were wine and brandy, its chief export, furs. Although furs were no longer very profitable by the eighteenth century, the French government maintained and even expanded the fur trade because it would need Native American military support in another war with England. The government actually lost money by sending large amounts of cloth, firearms, and other manufactured commodities to Indian allies in exchange for furs. Moreover, France maintained a sizable army in its Canadian colony that, like the trade with Indians, was a drain on the royal treasury. Meanwhile, Canada attracted little private investment either from France or from within the colony. French Canadians enjoyed a standard of living comparable with that of English colonists but lacked the private investment, the extensive commercial infrastructure, the vast consumer market, and the manufacturing capacity of the British colonies.

France's greatest economic success in the Americas was in the West Indies where French planters emulated the English by importing large numbers of slaves to produce sugar under appalling conditions. Ironically this success was partly a result of French planters' defying mercantilist policies. In St. Domingue, Martinique, and Guadeloupe, many planters built their own sugar

refineries and made molasses instead of shipping their raw sugar to refineries in France, as mercantilism prescribed. They then sold much of their molasses to merchants from Britain's mainland colonies, especially Massachusetts. France attempted to duplicate its Caribbean success in Louisiana but quickly found that, as in Canada, dependence on Native Americans and other factors rendered the colony economically unprofitable.

Spain was even weaker economically than France. The monarchy's early success in extracting bullion (gold and silver) from the Americas set off a general surge in prices that undermined Spain's already weak manufacturing sector. Spaniards at home and in the Americas sought to obtain cheaper goods from other countries but were hampered by mercantilist quotas, duties, and other regulations that rendered imports scarce or expensive. In response many Spanish colonists turned to smuggling goods to and from Spain's supposed enemies. On the frontier between Texas and Louisiana, Spanish traders offered Louisianans horses in exchange for French goods. Spaniards in Florida interacted with English, French, and the Indian allies of both—even for commodities as basic as food. Without the flourishing of contraband trade, Spain's colonies in North America might not have survived.

At bottom, the difference between England's colonies and those of France and Spain reflected a fundamental difference in their respective economies and societies. While all three nations were governed according to mercantilist principles, France and Spain remained societies in which most wealth was controlled by the monarchy, the nobility, and the Catholic Church. Most private wealth was inherited and took the form of land rather than liquid assets. England, on the other hand, had made the transition to a mercantile-commercial economy in which much of the nation's wealth was in the form of capital held by merchants who reinvested it in commercial and shipping enterprises. For its part the British government used much of its considerable income from duties, tariffs, and other taxes to enhance commerce. For example, the government strengthened Britain's powerful navy to protect the empire's trade and created the Bank of England in 1694 to ensure a stable money supply and lay the foundation for a network of lending institutions. By the mid-eighteenth century, investments in British enterprises were moving the country from a strictly commercial economy to the world's first industrial one.



## *A Burgeoning, Diversifying Population*

Britain's economic advantage over its rivals was reinforced by the demographic disparities between its colonies and those of France and Spain. In 1700 approximately 250,000 non-Indians resided in English America whereas French colonists numbered only 15,000 and the Spanish just 4,500. During the first half of the eighteenth century, all three colonial populations at least quadrupled in size—the British to 1,170,000, the French to 60,000, and the Spanish to 19,000. With the passage of time, Britain's advantage only magnified.

Immigrants from Spain could choose among that nation's many Latin American colonies, most of which offered more opportunities than poorly developed Florida, Texas, and New Mexico. Most potential French immigrants were trapped at home by poverty. Those who could seek opportunities elsewhere were deterred by reports of the harsh Canadian winter and of Louisiana's poor economy. With few exceptions, neither France nor Spain attempted to attract colonists from outside their own empires, and both limited non-slave immigration to Roman Catholics, a restriction that diverted many French Huguenot emigrants to the English colonies instead. The English colonies, on the other hand, boasted good farmlands, a healthy economy, and a willingness to absorb members of all European nationalities and of most Protestant denominations. (Although anti-Catholicism remained strong, small Jewish communities formed in several colonial cities.)

Spain regarded its colonies north of Mexico and the Caribbean less as centers of population than as buffers against French and English penetration of their more valued colonies to the south. While hoping to lure civilian settlers, the Spanish relied heavily on soldiers stationed in *presidios* (forts) for defense plus missionaries who would, they hoped, settle loyal Native Americans at strategically placed missions. Most immigrants to the colonies came not from Spain itself but from Mexico and other Spanish colonies in Latin America and, in the case of Texas, the Canary Islands (a Spanish colony off the West African coast).

Although boasting a larger population than the Spanish colonies, New France and Louisiana experienced similar limitations. Here too the military played a strong role while missionaries and traders worked to enhance the colony's relations with Native Americans. Canada's population growth in the eighteenth century was largely a result of natural increase rather than of

immigration. Some members of Canada's burgeoning rural population established new settlements along the Mississippi River in upper Louisiana, now part of Illinois and Missouri. But on the lower Mississippi, Louisiana acquired a foul reputation, and too few French immigrated there willingly. To boost its population, the government sent paupers and criminals, recruited some German refugees, and encouraged large-scale slave imports. By 1732 two-thirds of lower Louisiana's 5,800 people were slaves.

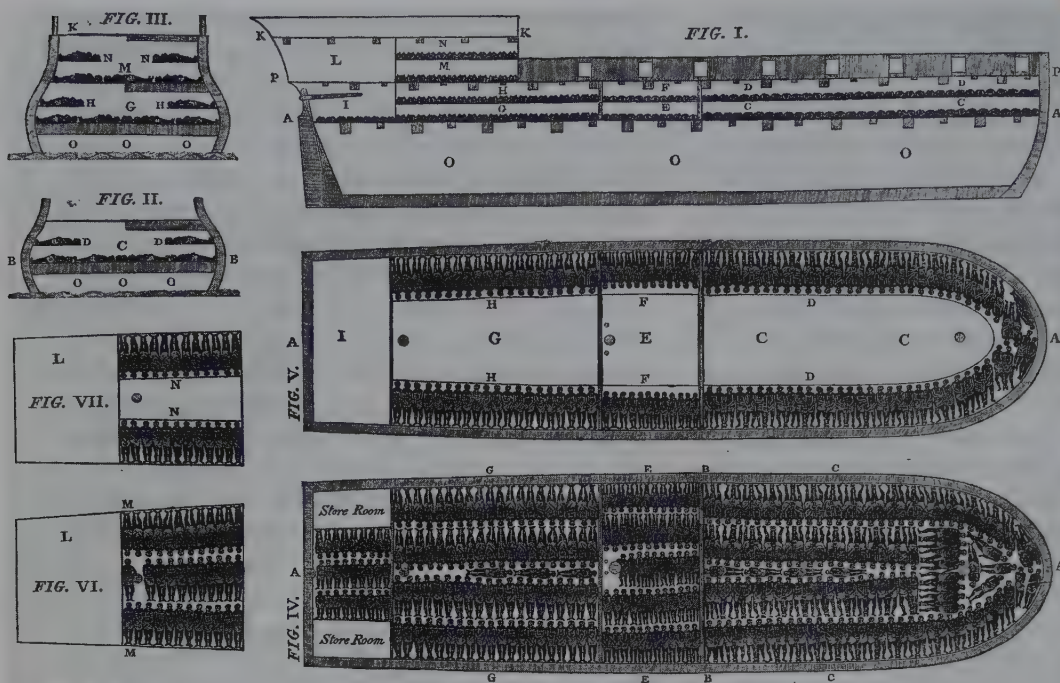
The British colonies outpaced the population growth of not only their French and Spanish rivals but Britain itself. White women in the colonies had an average of eight children and forty-two grandchildren; British women at the same time typically bore five children and had fifteen grandchildren. The ratio of England's population to that of the mainland colonies plummeted from 20 to 1 (1700) to 3 to 1 (1775).

In the eighteenth century, immigration continued to contribute significantly to colonial population growth, although it became less important than natural increase. In the forty years after Queen Anne's War, the colonies absorbed 350,000 newcomers, 40 percent of them (140,000) African-born slaves who had survived a sea crossing of sickening brutality. All but a few enslaved immigrants originated along the west coast of Africa between Senegambia and Angola. Whereas most planters made few distinctions as to Africans' backgrounds, many in South Carolina expressly sought slaves from Gambia and nearby regions for their rice-growing experience.

Conditions aboard slave ships were appalling by any standard. Olaudah Equiano was an enslaved Ibo from the area that today is Nigeria. Equiano, who eventually became free, Christian, and an abolitionist, recalled being put aboard a Barbados-bound ship in 1756:

I was soon put down under the decks, and there I received such salutation in my nostrils as I had never experienced in my life; so that, with the loathsomeness of the stench, and crying together, I became so sick and low that I was not able to eat, nor had I the least desire to taste any thing. . . . On my refusing to eat, one of them [white men] held me fast by the hands, and laid me across I think the windlass while the other flogged me severely. . . . Could I have got over the nettings, I would have jumped over the side, but I could not.

From 1713 to 1754, five times as many slaves poured onto mainland North America as in all the preceding years. The proportion of blacks in the colonies dou-



### Architect's Plan of a Slave Ship

*This plan graphically depicts the crowded, unsanitary conditions under which enslaved Africans were packed like cargo and transported across the Atlantic.*

bled, rising from 11 percent at the beginning of the century to 20 percent by midcentury. Slavery was primarily a southern institution, but 15 percent of its victims lived north of Maryland, mostly in New York and New Jersey. By 1750 every seventh New Yorker was a slave.

Because West Indian and Brazilian slave buyers outbid the mainland colonists, a mere 5 percent of transported Africans were ever sold within the present-day United States. Unable to buy as many male field hands as they needed, mainland masters had no choice but to accept numerous female workers, and they protected their investments by maintaining the slaves' health. These factors promoted family formation and increased life expectancy far beyond the levels in the Caribbean, where family life was unstable and high death rates resulted from overwork and disease (see Chapter 3). On the mainland by 1750, the rate of natural increase for blacks almost equaled that for whites, and in some areas American-born slaves outnumbered those born in Africa.

The approximately 210,000 whites who immigrated during these years included a sharply reduced share from England compared to the seventeenth century. Whereas between 1630 and 1700 an average of 2,000 English settlers landed annually (constituting 90

percent of all European immigrants), after 1713 the English contribution dropped to about 500 a year. Rising employment and higher wages in eighteenth-century England simply made voluntary immigration to America far less attractive than before. But economic hardship elsewhere in the British Isles and northern Europe supplied a steady stream of immigrants, and their coming ensured that white North Americans were growing more ethnically diverse.

The largest European contingent comprised 100,000 newcomers from Ireland, two-thirds of them "Scots-Irish" descendants of sixteenth-century Scottish Presbyterians who had settled in northern Ireland. After 1718 Scots-Irish fled to America to escape rack renting (frequent increases in farm rents), and they commonly came as complete families. In contrast, 90 percent of all Catholic Irish immigrants arrived as unmarried male indentured servants. Rarely able to find Catholic wives, they generally abandoned their faith to marry Protestant women.

Meanwhile, from Germany came a wave of 65,000 settlers, most of them refugees from terrible economic conditions in the Rhine Valley. Wartime devastation had compounded the misery of Rhenish peasants, many of whom were squeezed onto plots of land too small to feed a family. One-third of these people financed their



voyage as “redemptioners”—that is, they had sold themselves or their children as indentured servants. Most Germans were either Lutherans or Calvinists. But a significant minority belonged to small, pacifist religious sects that desired above all to be left alone.

Overwhelmingly, the eighteenth-century immigrants were poor. Those who became indentured servants had to give one to four years of work to an urban or rural master, who might well exploit them cruelly. Servants could be sold or rented out, beaten, granted minimal legal protection, kept from marrying, and sexually harassed; and attempted escape usually meant an extension of their service. But at the end of their term, most managed to collect “freedom dues,” which could help them to marry and acquire land.

Few immigrants settled permanently in those parts of North America where land was relatively scarce and expensive—New England, New Jersey, lower New York, and the southern tidewater. New Englanders in particular did not welcome people who might become public charges: “these confounded Irish will eat us all up,” snorted one Bostonian. Philadelphia became the immigrants’ primary port of entry. So many foreigners went to Pennsylvania that by 1755 the English accounted for only one-third of that colony’s population; the rest were mostly Germans and Scots-Irish.

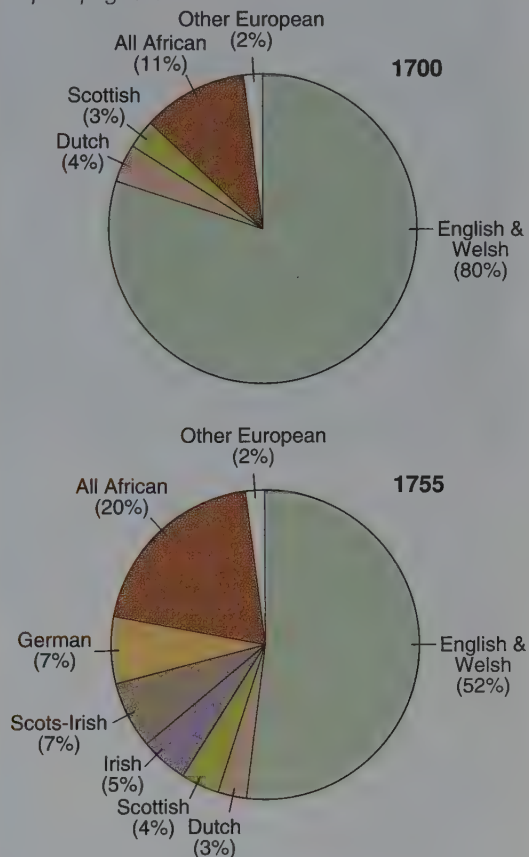
Rising numbers of immigrants also traveled to the piedmont region, stretching along the eastern slope of the Appalachians. A significant German community developed in upper New York, and thousands of other Germans as well as Scots-Irish fanned southward from Pennsylvania into western Maryland. Many more from Germany and Ireland arrived in the second-most popular gateway to eighteenth-century America, Charles Town, whence they moved on to settle the Carolina piedmont. There they raised grain, livestock, and tobacco, generally without slaves. After 1750 both streams of immigration merged with an outpouring of Anglo-Americans from the Chesapeake in the rolling, fertile hills of western North Carolina. In 1713 few Anglo-Americans had lived more than fifty miles from the sea, but by 1750 one-third of all colonists resided in the piedmont.

English-descended colonists did not relish the influx of so many foreigners. Franklin spoke for many when he asked in his 1751 essay on population,

why should the Palatine boors [Germans] be suffered to swarm into our settlements, and, by herding together, establish their language and manners, to the exclusion of ours? Why should Pennsylvania,

### Distribution of Non-Indian Nationalities Within the British Mainland Colonies, 1700–1755

*The impact of heavy immigration from 1720 to 1755 can be seen in the reduction of the English and Welsh from four-fifths of the colonial population to a slight majority; in the doubling of the African population; and in the sudden influx of Germans and Irish, who together comprised a fifth of all Anglo-Americans by 1755. For a more detailed breakdown of African origins, see the map on page 92.*

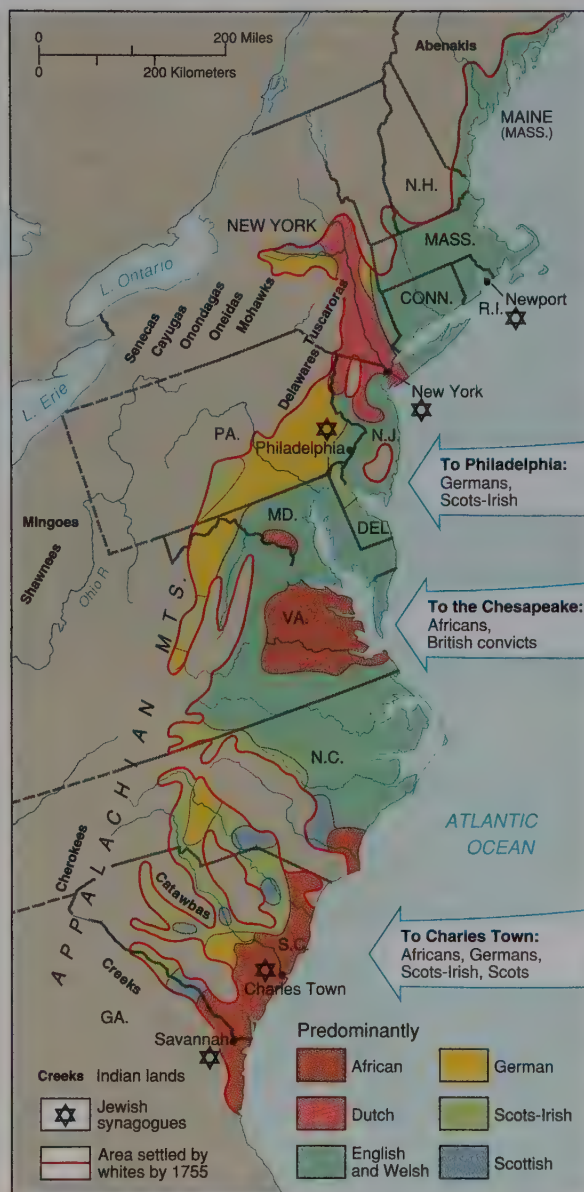


Source: Thomas L. Purvis, “The European Ancestry of the United States Population,” *William & Mary Quarterly*, LXI (1984): 85–101.

founded by the English, become a colony of aliens, who will shortly be so numerous as to Germanize us instead of us Anglicizing them, and will never adopt our language or customs any more than they can acquire our complexion?

In the same ungenerous spirit, Franklin objected to the slave trade largely because it would increase America’s black population at the expense of industrious whites.

On another occasion, Franklin suggested that the colonists send rattlesnakes to Britain in return for the



### Immigration and Frontier Expansion, to 1755

*A sharp rise in the importance of African slaves made much of the southern tidewater a predominantly black region. Immigrants from Germany, Ireland, and Scotland tended to settle in the piedmont. A significant Jewish population emerged in the seaports.*

convict laborers dumped on American shores. Deportation of lawbreakers to America had been common enough in the seventeenth century, and between 1718 and 1783, some thirty thousand convicts arrived. A few were murderers; most were thieves; some were guilty of the most trivial offenses, like a young Londoner who

“got intoxicated with liquor, and in that condition attempted to snatch a handkerchief from the body of a person in the street to him unknown. . . .” Convicts were sold as servants on arrival. Relatively few committed crimes in America, and some managed eventually to establish themselves as backcountry farmers. But like many contemporary Americans, colonists seldom wished to absorb the victims of other nations’ social problems.

### Rural Men and Women

Although the benefits of rising living standards in the British colonies were widespread, the colonial population enjoyed these advantages unevenly. With few exceptions—Benjamin Franklin is the best known—true affluence was reserved for those born wealthy. For the rest, personal success was limited and came only through hard work, if at all.

Because the vast majority of farm families owned just enough acreage for a working farm, they could not provide their children with land of their own when they married. Moreover, since couples typically started having children in their midtwenties, had their last babies sometime after forty, and lived past sixty, all but their youngest children would be approaching middle age before receiving any inheritance. Young adults rarely got more than a sixth or seventh of their parents’ estate, because most families wrote wills that divided property evenly—or almost so—among all daughters and sons. A young male had to build savings to buy farm equipment by working (from about age sixteen to twenty-three) as a field hand for his father or neighbors. Because mortgages usually required down payments of 33 percent, a young husband normally supported his growing family by renting a farm from a more prosperous landowner until his early or midthirties. In some areas, most notably the oldest colonized areas of New England, the continued high birthrates of rural families combined with a shortage of productive land to limit farming opportunities altogether. As a result, many young men turned elsewhere to make their livings—the frontier, the port cities, or the high seas.

Even after acquiring their own land, many farmers supplemented their incomes through seasonal or part-time work. Some learned a craft like carpentry that earned money year-round. Many more trapped furs, gathered honey and beeswax, or made cider, shingles, turpentine, or wampum. Whenever possible, farmers found wintertime jobs draining meadows, clearing fields, or fencing land for wealthier neighbors.



Families worked off mortgages slowly because the long-term cash income from a farm (6 percent) about equaled the interest on borrowed money (5–8 percent). After making a down payment of one-third, a husband and wife generally satisfied the next third upon inheriting shares of their deceased parents' estates. They paid off the final third when their children reached their teens and the family could thus expand farm output with two or three full-time workers. Only by their late fifties, just as their youngest offspring got ready to leave home, could most colonial parents hope to free themselves of debt.

In general, the more isolated a community or the less productive its farmland, the more self-sufficiency and bartering its people practiced, although only the remotest settlements were completely self-sufficient. Rural families depended heavily on wives' and daughters' production. Women contributed to their household's financial success by manufacturing items that the family would otherwise have had to purchase. Besides cooking, cleaning, and washing, wives preserved food, boiled soap, made clothing, and tended the garden, dairy, orchard, poultry house, and pigsty. Women often sold dairy products to neighbors or export merchants, spun yarn into cloth for tailors, knitted various garments for sale, and even vended their own hair for wigs. A farm family's ability to feed itself and its animals was worth about half of its cash income (a luxury that few European peasants enjoyed), and women did no less than men in meeting this end.

Legally, however, women in the British colonies found themselves constrained (see Chapter 3). A woman's single most autonomous decision was her choice of a husband. Once married, she lost control of her dowry, unless she was a New Yorker subject to Dutch custom, which allowed her somewhat more authority. Women in the French and Spanish colonies retained ownership of, and often augmented, the property they brought to a marriage. Widows did control between 8 and 10 percent of all property in eighteenth-century Anglo-America, and a few—among them Eliza Pinckney of South Carolina, a prominent political leader and the mother of two Revolutionary-era leaders—owned and managed large estates.

### ***Colonial Farmers and the Environment***

The rapid expansion of European settlement hastened the transformation of the environment east of the Appalachians. Whereas the earliest colonists farmed land already cleared and cultivated by Native Americans,



#### **Women's Work**

*Rural women were responsible for most household and garden tasks. This print, dating to 1780, shows young women tending onions in Wethersfield, Connecticut.*

eighteenth-century settlers usually first had to remove trees from their plots. Despite the labor involved, farmers and planters, especially those using slave labor, preferred the most heavily forested areas, where the soil was most fertile. New England farmers also had to clear innumerable heavy rocks—debris from the last Ice Age—with which they then built walls around their fields. And colonists everywhere used timber to construct their houses, barns, and fences and to provide fuel for heating and cooking. Farmers and planters also sold firewood to the inhabitants of colonial cities and towns. Only six years after Georgia's founding, a colonist noted that there was "no more firewood in Savannah; . . . it must be bought from the plantations for which reason firewood is already right expensive."

In removing the trees (deforestation), farmers drove away bears, panthers, wild turkeys, and other forest animals while attracting grass- and seed-eating rabbits, mice, and possums. By removing protection from winds and, in summer, from the sun, deforestation also produced warmer summers and colder winters, so that it actually reinforced the demand for wood

as fuel. By hastening the runoff of spring waters, it led both to heavier flooding and drier streambeds in most areas and, where water could not escape, to more extensive swamps. In turn, less stable temperatures and water levels, along with impediments created by mills and by the floating of timbers downstream, rapidly reduced the number of fish in colonial waters. Writing in 1766, naturalist John Bartram noted that fish “abounded formerly when the Indians lived much on them & was very numerous,” but that “now there is not the 100[th] or perhaps the 1000th [portion of] fish to be found.”

Deforestation dried and hardened the soil, but colonists' crops had even more drastic effects. Native Americans, recognizing the soil-depleting effects of intensive cultivation, rotated their crops regularly so that fields could lie fallow (unplanted) and thereby be replenished with vital nutrients. But many colonial farmers either did not have enough land to leave some unplanted or were unwilling to sacrifice short-term profits for possible long-term benefits. As early as 1637, one New England farmer discovered that his soil “after five or six years [of planting corn] grows barren beyond belief and puts on the face of winter in the time of summer.” Chesapeake planters' tobacco yields declined after only three or four years in the same plot. Like farmers elsewhere, they used animal manure to fertilize their food crops but not their tobacco, fearing that manure would spoil the taste for consumers. As Chesapeake tobacco growers moved inland to hillier areas, away from rivers and streams, they also contributed to increased soil erosion. By 1750, to remain productive, many Chesapeake farmers were shifting their crop from tobacco to wheat.

Because they confronted a more serious shortage of land and resources, well-to-do farmers in Europe were already turning their attention to conservation and “scientific” farming. But most colonists ignored such techniques, either because they could not afford to implement them or because they believed that American land, including that still held by Indians, would sustain them and future generations indefinitely.

### *The Urban Paradox*

The cities were British North America's economic paradox. As the ports of entry and exit, they were keys to colonial prosperity; yet most of their inhabitants were caught in a downward spiral of declining opportunity.

After 1740 economic success proved ever more elusive for the 4 percent of colonists who lived in the three major seaports of Philadelphia, New York, and Boston. Debilitating ocean voyages left many immigrants too weak to work, and every incoming ship from Europe carried numerous widows and orphans. Moreover, the cities' poor rolls always bulged with the survivors of mariners lost at sea, as well as with unskilled, landless men, women (often widowed), and children from the countryside. High population density and poor sanitation in urban locales allowed contagious diseases to run rampant, so that half of all city children died before age twenty-one and urban adults lived ten years less on average than country folk.

Even the able-bodied found cities economically treacherous. Early-eighteenth-century urban artisans typically trained apprentices and employed them as journeymen for many years until the latter opened their own shops. After 1750, however, more and more employers kept their labor force only as long as business was brisk, and released workers when sales slowed; in 1751 a shrewd Benjamin Franklin recommended this practice as an intelligent way to use expensive labor. Recessions hit more frequently after 1720 and created longer spells of unemployment. As urban populations ballooned, wages correspondingly tended to shrink, and the cost of rents, food, and firewood shot up.

Urban poverty grew from insignificance before 1700 into a major problem in the mid-eighteenth century. By 1730 Boston could no longer shelter its destitute in the almshouse built in 1685, and by 1741 the town had declared every sixth citizen too poor to pay taxes. Not until 1736 did New York need a poorhouse (for just forty people), but by 1772, 4 percent of its residents (over eight hundred people) required public assistance to survive. The number of Philadelphia families listed as poor on tax rolls jumped from 3 percent in 1720 to 11 percent by 1760.

Wealth, on the other hand, remained highly concentrated in eighteenth-century colonial cities. For example, New York's wealthiest 10 percent (mostly merchants) owned about 45 percent of the property throughout the eighteenth century. Similar patterns existed in Boston and Philadelphia. Set alongside the growth of a poor underclass in these cities, such statistics underscored the polarization of status and wealth in urban America on the eve of the Revolution.

Most southern cities were little more than large towns. Charles Town, however, became North America's fourth-largest city. South Carolina's capital offered



gracious living to the wealthy planters who flocked to their townhouses during the months of worst heat and insect infestation on their plantations. But shanties on the city's outskirts sheltered a growing crowd of destitute whites. The colony encouraged whites to immigrate in hopes of reducing blacks' numerical preponderance, but some European newcomers could not reach frontier farms or find any work except as ill-paid roustabouts. Like their counterparts in northern port cities, Charles Town's poor whites competed for work with urban slaves whose masters rented out their labor, and racial tensions simmered.

Although middle-class women in cities and large towns performed somewhat less manual drudgery than their country cousins, they nonetheless managed complex households that often included servants, slaves, apprentices, and other nonfamily members. While raising poultry and vegetables as well as sewing and knitting, urban wives purchased their cloth and most of their food in daily trips to public markets. Many had one or more household servants, usually young single women or widows, to help with cooking, cleaning, and laundering—tasks that required more attention than in the country because of higher urban standards of cleanliness and appearance. Wives also worked in family businesses or their own shops, located (unlike in modern times) in owners' homes.

Less affluent wives and widows housed boarders rather than servants, and many spun and wove cloth in their homes for local merchants. But especially in Boston, where conditions were the grimmest, many widows with children had to look to the community for relief. Whereas their Puritan forebears had deemed it one's Christian duty to care for poor dependents, affluent Bostonians turned an increasingly wary eye toward the needy. Preaching in 1752, the city's leading minister, Charles Chauncy, lamented "the Swarms of Children, of both Sexes, that are continually strolling and playing about the Streets of our Metropolis, cloathed in Rags, and brought up in Idleness and Ignorance," and another clergyman warned that charity for widows and their children was money "worse than Lost."

### ***Slavery's Wages***

For slaves, the economic progress achieved in colonial America meant only that most masters could afford to keep them healthy. Rarely, however, did masters choose to make their human chattels comfortable. A visitor to a Virginia plantation from Poland (where

Just imported in Capt. Partidge from LONDON  
and to be Sold by

**Sufanna Renken,**

*At her Shop in Fore-Street near the Draw-Bridge,  
BOSTON, Viz.*

**E**ARLY Charlton, Hotspur, Marrowfat, Golden Hotspur, and blue Marrowfat Peas; Large Windsor, early Hotspur, early yellow Kidney, early Spanish Beans:—Early Yorkshire, Dutch, Battersea, Red, and large Winter Cabbage: yellow and green Savoy; Purple and Colliflower Brocoli; white Goss-Cabbage, Marble, white Silesia, green Silesia, and scarlet Lettice, green and yellow Hyssop; Turkey Melons; and Winter Savory; with all sorts of other Garden Seeds, among which are a great Variety of Flower-Seeds:—Red and white Clover, Herd Grass and Trefoile.

Just Imported from LONDON, and to be Sold

**By Sarah DeCoster,**

*At the Sign of the Walnut-Tree in Milk-Street in  
Boston, a little below the Rev. Dr. Sewall's  
Meeting-House,*

**W**INDSOR Beans; Early Peas of several Sorts; Early Cabbage-Seeds, and other Sorts of Garden-Seeds; too many to enumerate: All at reasonable Rates.

### **Newspaper Ads**

*Women shopkeepers were common in the cities, especially in trades that required only a small investment. These three Boston women advertised imported garden seeds..*

most peasants lived in dire poverty) recorded this impression of slaves' quality of life:

We entered some Negroes huts—for their habitations cannot be called houses. They are far more miserable than the poorest of the cottages of our peasants. The husband and wife sleep on a miserable bed, the children on the floor . . . a little kitchen furniture amid this misery . . . a teakettle and cups . . . five or six hens, each with ten or fifteen chickens, walked there. That is the only pleasure allowed to the negroes.

To maintain slaves, masters normally spent just 40 percent of the amount paid for the upkeep of indentured servants. Whereas white servants ate two hundred pounds of beef or pork yearly, most slaves consumed only fifty pounds of meat. The value of the beer and hard cider given to a typical servant alone equaled the expense of feeding and clothing the average slave. Masters usually provided adult slaves with eight quarts of corn

and a pound of pork each week but expected them to grow their own vegetables, forage for wild fruits, and perhaps raise poultry.

Slaves worked for a far longer portion of their lives than whites. Slave children went to the fields as part-time helpers soon after reaching seven years and began working full-time between eleven and fourteen. Whereas most white women worked in their homes, barns, and gardens, female slaves routinely tended tobacco or rice crops, even when pregnant, and often worked outdoors in winter. Most slaves toiled until they died, although those who survived to their sixties rarely performed hard labor.

Despite the rigors of bondage, slaves proved resourceful at maximizing opportunities within this harsh, confining system. For example, some slaves gained exclusive rights to their own gardens and poultry, and a few sold food to their masters. In 1769, for example, Thomas Jefferson made several purchases like the following:

gave negro for watermelon	7 pence
paid Fanny for 6 chickens	2 shillings
paid Cato for 1 doz eggs	3 pence

House slaves widely insisted on being tipped by guests for shining shoes and stabling horses. They sometimes sought presents aggressively on holidays, as a startled New Jersey tutor on a Virginia plantation discovered in 1774 when slaves demanding gifts of cash roused him from bed early Christmas morning.

In the South Carolina and Georgia rice country, slaves working under the task system had control of about half their waking hours. Under tasking, each slave spent some hours caring for a quarter-acre—usually a half-day—after which his or her duties ended. By 1750 this system permitted certain slaves to keep hogs and sell surplus vegetables in Charles Town. A remarkable but atypical slave named Sampson earned enough money in his off-hours to hire another to work his own task, and became free in 1728.

But the independence of South Carolina's slaves and the fact that they constituted a majority of the colony's population aroused planters' fears that they were losing control of "their" blacks. For example, a 1735 law, noting that many Africans wore "clothes much above the condition of slaves," imposed a dress code limiting slaves' apparel to fabrics worth less than ten shillings per yard and even prohibited their wearing the cast-off clothes of their owners. Of even greater concern were gatherings of large numbers of blacks uncontrolled by whites. In 1721 Charles Town enacted a 9:00 P.M. curfew for blacks, while South Carolina's assembly placed all local slave patrols under the colonial militia. Slaves responded to the colony's vigilance and harsher punishments with increased instances of arson, theft, flight, and violence.

Tensions erupted in 1739 when South Carolina was rocked by a powerful slave uprising, the Stono Rebellion. It began when twenty slaves robbed guns and ammunition from a store twenty miles from Charles Town, at the Stono River Bridge. Marching under a makeshift flag and crying "Liberty!" they collected eighty men and headed for Spanish Florida, a well-known refuge for runaways (see *A Place in Time*). Along the way they burned seven plantations and killed twenty whites, but they spared a Scottish innkeeper who "was a good Man and kind to his slaves." Within a day mounted militia surrounded the slaves by a riverbank, cut them down mercilessly, and spiked a rebel head on every milepost between that spot and Charles Town. Disturbances elsewhere in the colony required more than a month to suppress, with insurgents generally "put to the most cruel Death." Thereafter white apprehension ran high, expressed in a new slave code that would remain essentially in force until the Civil War. The code kept South Carolina slaves under constant surveillance. Furthermore, it threatened masters with fines for not disciplining slaves and required legislative approval for manumission (freeing of individual slaves). The Stono

### Asante Drum

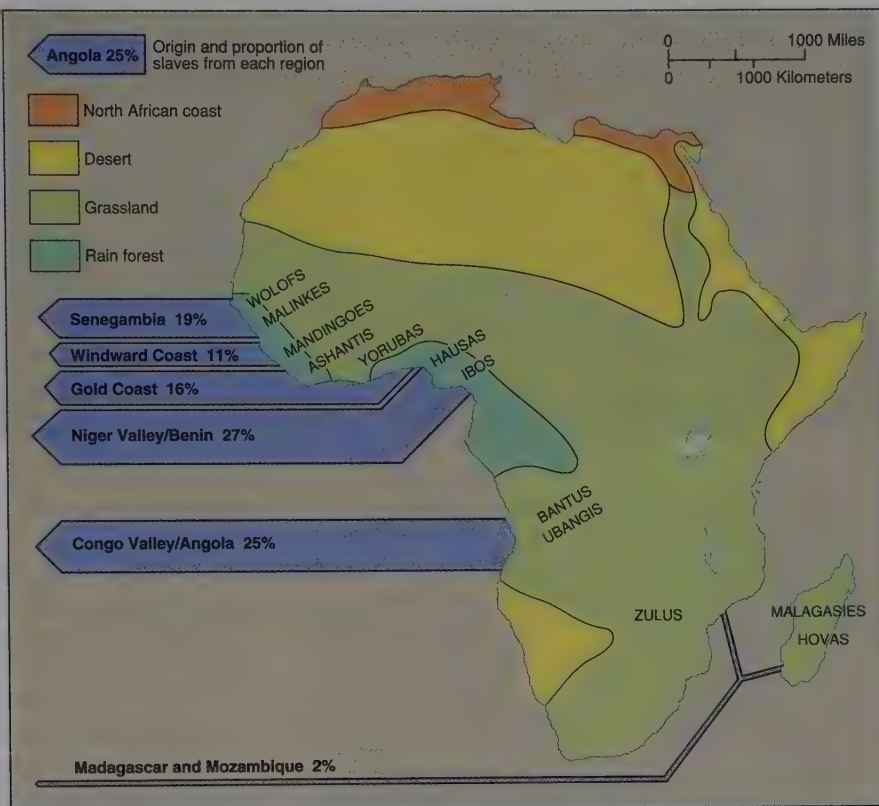
*Enslaved Africans carried their cultures with them to the Americas. This drum, made from African wood, was found in Virginia.*





## African Origins of North American Slaves, 1690–1807

*Virtually all slaves brought to English North America came from West Africa, between Senegambia and Angola. Most were captured or bought inland and marched to the coast, where they were sold to African merchants who in turn sold them to European slave traders.*



Rebellion thus speeded South Carolina's emergence as a rigid, racist, and fear-ridden society.

Slavery and racial tensions were by no means confined to plantations. By midcentury slaves made up 20 percent of New York City's population and formed a majority in Charles Town and Savannah. City life offered slaves advantages, most notably the chance for those with skills to hire themselves out and keep part of their wages. By 1770 one-tenth of Savannah's slaves lived in rented rooms away from their owners. Though still in bondage, these blacks forced urban whites to allow them a substantial measure of personal freedom. But although city life afforded slaves greater freedom of association than the plantation did, it did not extend to them the opportunities being realized by their owners. In 1712 rebellious slaves in New York City killed nine whites in a calculated attack. As a result thirteen slaves were hanged, one was starved to death, three were burned at the stake, and one was broken on the wheel. Six others committed suicide to avoid similar tortures. In 1741 a wave of thefts and fires attributed to New York slaves led to the torture and hanging of thirteen slaves

and four white accomplices, the burning of an additional thirteen slaves, and the sale of seventy more to the West Indies.

### *The Rise of the Colonial Elites*

"A man who has money here, no matter how he came by it, he is everything, and wanting [lacking] that he's a mere nothing, let his conduct be ever so irreproachable." Thus a Rhode Islander in 1748 described how colonial Americans defined high status. But once having achieved wealth, a man was expected by his contemporaries to behave with an appropriate degree of responsibility, to display dignity and generosity, and to be a community leader. His wife must be a skillful household manager and, in the presence of men, a refined yet deferring hostess. In short, they were to act like a "gentleman" and a "lady."\*

\* In the eighteenth century, the words *gentleman* and *lady* referred to individuals who not only conformed to socially accepted standards of behavior but also belonged to the upper class, or *gentry*.



### John Potter and His Family

*The Potters of Matunuck, Rhode Island, relax at tea. In commissioning a portrait depicting themselves at leisure and attended by a black slave, the Potters proclaimed their elite status.*

Before 1700 the colonies' class structure was less readily apparent, because the elite's more limited resources were spent buying land, servants, or slaves instead of luxuries. As late as 1715 a traveler visiting one of Virginia's richest planters, Robert Beverley, noticed that his host owned "nothing in or about his house but just what is necessary, . . . [such as] good beds but no curtains and instead of cane chairs he hath stools made of wood."

After 1720 British mercantilist trade flourished. Higher incomes enabled well-to-do colonists to display their wealth more openly, particularly in their housing. The greater gentry—the richest 2 percent, who held about 15 percent of all property—constructed residences such as the Low House, New Jersey's most splendid home in 1741, and the Shirley mansion in Virginia. The lesser gentry, or second-wealthiest 2 to 10 percent, who held about 25 percent of all property, typically lived in a more modest fieldstone dwelling such as Pennsylvania's Lincoln homestead or a wood-frame house such as Whitehall in Rhode Island. In contrast, middle-class farmers commonly inhabited one-story wooden buildings with four small rooms and a loft.

Colonial gentlemen and ladies also exhibited their wealth after 1720 by living in imitation of the European "grand style." They wore costly English fashions, drove carriages instead of wagons, and bought expensive chinaware, books, furniture, and musical instruments. They pursued a gracious life by studying foreign languages, learning formal dances, and cultivating polite manners. In sports men's preference shifted to horse racing (on which they bet avidly) and away from cock-fighting, a less elegant diversion. A few young colonial males even got an English education. By midcentury the elite's taste for consumer goods was spreading to

the middle class and helping to fuel a "consumer revolution" in the British Empire.

For Chesapeake gentlemen, debt was a problem even if they lived thriftily. Tobacco planters were perpetually short of cash and in debt to British merchants who bought their crops and sold them imported goods on credit at high prices. Planters could respond only in two ways. First, they could strive for as much self-sufficiency as possible on their estates—for example, by training their slaves to manufacture glass, bricks, tools, nails, and carriages. Second, they could diversify away from the region's tobacco monoculture (dependence on a single staple crop) by growing wheat or cutting timber. Self-sufficiency and diversification became more widely accepted objectives as the eighteenth century wore on, and after 1750 respected landowners like George Washington and Thomas Jefferson strongly advocated them.

### Elites and Colonial Politics

Colonial gentlemen not only monopolized wealth but also dominated politics. Governors invariably appointed members of the greater gentry to sit on their councils and as judges on the highest courts. Most representatives elected to the legislatures' lower houses (assemblies) also ranked among the wealthiest 2 percent, as did majors and colonels in the militia. In contrast, members of the lesser gentry sat less often in the legislature, but they commonly served as justices of the peace on the county courts and as militia officers up to captain.

Colonial America's only high-ranking elected officeholders were the members of the legislature's lower house. But outside New England (where any voter



could hold office), legal requirements barred 80 percent of white men from running for the assembly, most often by specifying that a candidate must own a minimum of a thousand acres. (Farms then averaged 180 acres in the South and 120 acres in the middle colonies.) Even had there been no such property qualifications, however, few ordinary citizens could have afforded the high costs of elective office. Assemblymen received only living expenses, which might not fully cover the cost of staying at their province's capital, much less compensate a farmer or an artisan for his absence from farm or shop for six to ten weeks a year. Even members of the gentry grumbled about legislative duty, many of them viewing high office as "a sort of tax on them to serve the public at their own Expense besides the neglect of their business," according to Governor Lewis Morris of New Jersey.

For these reasons, political leadership fell to certain wealthy families with a tradition of public service. Nine families, for example, provided one-third of Virginia's royal councilors during the century after 1680. John Adams, a rising young Massachusetts politician, estimated that most towns in his colony chose their legislators from among just three or four families.

The colonies set liberal qualifications for male voters, but all provinces excluded women, blacks (free as well as enslaved), and Indians from elections. In seven colonies voters had to own land (usually forty to fifty acres), and the rest demanded that an elector have enough property to furnish a house and work a farm with his own tools. About 40 percent of free men could not meet these requirements, mostly indentured servants, single sons still living with parents, or young men just beginning family life. Most white males in British North America would vote by age forty, whereas two-thirds of all men in England and nine-tenths in Ireland could not and would never vote.

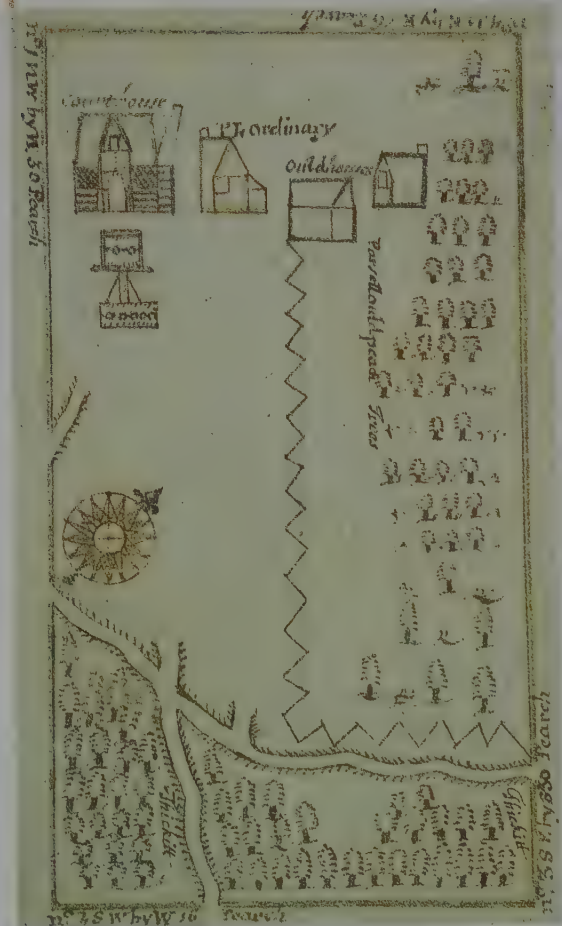
In rural areas voter participation was low unless a vital issue was at stake. The difficulties of voting limited the average rural turnout to about 45 percent. (This rate of participation was, however, better than in typical U.S. elections today, apart from those for president.) Most governors called elections according to no set pattern, so that elections might lapse for years and suddenly be held on very short notice. Voters in isolated areas thus often had no knowledge of an upcoming contest. The fact that all polling took place at the county seat discouraged many electors from traveling long distances over poor roads to vote. In several colonies voters had to state their choice publicly, often

face-to-face with the candidates. This procedure naturally inhibited participation on the part of those who might dissent. Finally, the absence of political parties also played a role in the turnout: no institutional means existed to stimulate popular interest in politics and to mobilize voters in support of candidates. Office seekers nominated themselves and usually ran on their reputation rather than issues that might spur public interest.

In view of these factors, indifference toward politics was not uncommon by the mid-eighteenth century. For

### Charles County, Maryland, Courthouse and Ordinary

*In the Chesapeake colonies, community life usually centered on the county courthouse and a few other buildings on a cleared parcel. On election days, voters were treated to drinks in the nearby ordinary (tavern) by candidates before proceeding to the courthouse and voting orally and publicly.*



example, to avoid paying legislators' expenses at the capital, numerous Massachusetts towns refused to choose assemblymen; in 1763, 64 of 168 towns held no elections. Thirty percent of men elected to South Carolina's assembly neglected to take their seats from 1731 to 1760, including a majority of those chosen in 1747 and 1749. Apathy would have been even greater had candidates not freely plied voters with alcohol. This "swilling the planters with bumbo" was most popular among Virginians: George Washington dispensed almost two quarts of liquor for each voter at the courthouse when first elected to the assembly in 1758. Such practices helped the elite in most eighteenth-century colonies build up a tradition of community leadership that would serve them well in the years of revolutionary crisis after 1763.

Only in the major seaports did a truly competitive political life flourish. Voter turnout was relatively high in the cities because of greater population density, better communications, and the use of secret ballots (except in New York). Furthermore, the cities' acute economic difficulties stimulated political participation among urban voters, ever hopeful that the government might ease their problems. In politics as in economics, cities were an exception to the general pattern for Anglo-America.

The most significant political development after 1700 was the rise of the assembly as the preponderant force in American government. Except in Connecticut and Rhode Island (where voters elected their governor), the crown or the proprietors in England chose each colony's governor, who except in Massachusetts in turn named a council, or upper house of the legislature. Thus the assembly became the vehicle through which members of the gentry asserted their own interests. Until 1689 governors and councils took the initiative in drafting laws, and the assemblies rather passively followed their lead; but thereafter, the assemblies assumed a more central role in politics.

Colonial leaders argued that their legislatures should exercise the same rights as those won by Parliament in its seventeenth-century struggle with royal authority. Indeed, Anglo-Americans saw their assemblies as miniature Houses of Commons, and they assumed that governors possessed only those powers exercised by the British crown. Since Parliament had won supremacy over the monarchy through the Bill of Rights in 1689, colonials felt that their governors had strictly limited powers and should defer to the assemblies in cases of disagreement.

The lower houses steadily asserted their prestige and authority by refusing to permit outside meddling in their proceedings, taking firm control over taxes and budgets, and especially by keeping a tight rein on executive salaries. Although governors had considerable powers (including the right to veto acts, call or dismiss assembly sessions at will, and schedule elections anytime), they were vulnerable to legislatures' financial pressure because they received no salary from British sources and relied on the assemblies for income. Only through this "power of the purse" could assemblies force governors to sign laws opposed by the crown.

Moreover, because the British government had little interest in eighteenth-century colonial politics, the assemblies could seize considerable power at the governors' expense. The Board of Trade, which Parliament established in 1696, was charged with monitoring American developments and advising the crown on colonial affairs. The board could have easily frustrated the assemblies' rise to power by persuading the crown to disallow objectionable colonial laws signed by the governors; but of 8,563 acts sent from the mainland between 1696 and 1776, the board had just 469 disapproved. The Board of Trade's ineffectiveness left a vacuum in royal policy that allowed the colonies to become self-governing in most respects except for trade regulation, restrictions on printing money, and declaring war. This autonomy, reinforced by self-assertive assemblies, would haunt British authorities when they attempted to exercise more direct rule after 1763 (see Chapter 5).

Thus during the first half of the eighteenth century, many colonists flourished and some grew wealthy. At the same time, however, class distinctions became more sharply etched. Far less than in the French and Spanish colonies, power and authority in British North America were disconnected from hereditary titles, royal appointment, the imperial army, and the state church. Instead, a homegrown provincial elite dominated public life.

## Competing for a Continent

The first half of the eighteenth century witnessed the rapid transformation of North America as Europeans competed among themselves in expanding their territorial claims, engaging in more intensive trade and warfare alike with Native Americans, and opening up new areas for settlement by colonists. Native Americans



## **Intercultural Trade in Colonial Louisiana**

*Alexandre de Batz, a French visitor in 1735, depicted an important dimension of Louisiana's economy in this drawing of Indians from several nations gathering to trade near New Orleans. Trade goods, including cured skins, kegs of fat, and bear oil, are lined up in the foreground.*



welcomed some of these new developments and resisted others, depending on how they thought their livelihoods would be affected.

## **France and Native Americans**

With the conclusion of the War of Spanish Succession in 1713, France aggressively resumed expanding and strengthening its North American empire, particularly the colony of Louisiana. Founded in 1718, New Orleans soon became the colony's capital and port. Louisiana's staunchest Indian allies were the Choctaws, through whom the French hoped to counter both the rapidly expanding influence of Carolina's traders and the weakening presence of the Spanish in the Southeast. But inroads by the persistent Carolinians led the Choctaws by the 1730s to become bitterly divided into pro-English and pro-French factions.

Life was dismal in Louisiana, for whites as well as blacks. A thoroughly corrupt government ran the colony. With Louisiana's sluggish export economy failing to sustain them, settlers and slaves found other means of survival. Like the Indians, they hunted, fished, gathered wild plants, and cultivated gardens. In 1727 a priest described how some free settlers eventually prospered: "A man with his wife or partner clears a little ground, builds himself a house on four piles, covers it with sheets of bark, and plants corn and rice for his provisions; the next year he raises a little more for

food, and has also a field of tobacco; if at last he succeeds in having three or four Negroes, then he is out of difficulties."

But many red, white, and black Louisianans depended on exchanges with one another in order to be "out of difficulties." Indians provided corn, bear oil, tallow (for candles), and above all deerskins to European merchants in return for blankets, kettles, axes, chickens, hogs, guns, and alcohol. Indians from west of the Mississippi brought horses and cattle, usually stolen from Spanish ranches in Texas. Familiar with cattle from their homelands, West African slaves managed many of Louisiana's herds, and some became rustlers and illicit traders of beef.

With Canada and Louisiana secure, the French sought to counter growing British influence in and around the Ohio Valley. After the valley was largely emptied of natives during wars with the Iroquois in the seventeenth century, the Iroquois' adoption of neutrality in 1701 (see Chapter 3) encouraged Indian refugees to settle there. Nations such as the Kickapoos and Mascoutens returned from the upper Great Lakes, while others, among them Shawnees and Delawares, arrived from the east to escape English encroachments. Hoping to secure commercial and diplomatic ties with these natives, the French expanded their trade activities. Detroit and several other French posts ballooned into sizable villages housing Indians, French, and mixed-ancestry *métis*. But with English traders increas-



### Huron (Wyandotte) Woman

*Her cloth dress, glass beads, and iron hoe reflect the influence of French trade on this woman and other Indians of the Great Lakes–Ohio region in the eighteenth century.*

ingly active in the region, most Indians preferred a more independent course.

Although the French generally were more successful among Indians than the English, by no means did they enjoy universal success. The Carolina-supported Chickasaws frequently attacked the French and their native allies on the Mississippi River. Although ultimately unsuccessful, the Mesquakie, or Fox, Indians led a long effort to prevent French traders from making direct contact with Sioux Indians to the west. And the French in 1729–1730 brutally suppressed the Natchez Indians, the last of the Mississippian peoples, in order to open up land in Louisiana for tobacco and sugar production.

By 1744 French fur traders had explored as far west as North Dakota and Colorado and were buying beaver pelts and Indian slaves on the Great Plains. At the instigation of these traders and their British competitors, trade goods, including guns, spread to Native Americans throughout central Canada and then to the Plains. Meanwhile, Indians in the Great Basin and southern Plains were acquiring horses, thousands of which had been left behind by the Spanish when they fled New Mexico during the Pueblo Revolt of 1680. Adopting the horse and gun, Indians such as the Lakota Sioux and Comanches moved to the Plains and built a new, highly mobile way of life based on the pursuit of buffalo. By 1750 France had an immense domain, but one that depended on often precarious relations with Native Americans.

### *Native Americans and British Expansion*

As in the seventeenth century, British colonial expansion was made possible by the depopulation and dislocation of Native Americans. Epidemic diseases, envi-

ronmental changes, war, and political pressures on Indians to cede land and to emigrate all combined to open up new lands for white immigrants. Pennsylvania, where William Penn's idealism was rapidly waning, coerced the Delaware Indians into selling more than fifty thousand acres between 1729 and 1734. In the latter year, the colony's leaders (William Penn's sons and his former secretary) produced a patently fraudulent treaty in which the Delawares allegedly had agreed in 1686 to sell their land as far west as a man could walk in a day and a half. In 1737, Pennsylvania blazed a trail and hired three men to walk west as fast as they could. The men covered nearly sixty miles, meaning that the Delawares, in what became known as the Walking Purchase, had to hand over an additional twelve hundred square miles of land. Despite the protests of Delaware elders who had been alive in 1686 and remembered no such treaty, the Delawares were forced to move under Iroquois supervision. The proprietors then sold these lands to settlers and speculators at a large profit. Within a generation the Delawares' former lands were among the most productive in the British Empire.

In helping to remove the Delawares from Pennsylvania, the Iroquois sought to accommodate the English while consolidating their own power. Late in the seventeenth century, the Iroquois had agreed with several colonies, from Maryland to Massachusetts, to relocate Indians whose lands were sought by colonists. Under these agreements, known collectively as the Covenant Chain, Indians were moved to areas of what are now New York and Pennsylvania on the periphery of the Iroquois' own homeland, where they could serve as buffers against English expansion. The removal of the Delawares marked Pennsylvania's entry into the Covenant Chain. In so grouping other Native Americans around them and in incorporating the Tuscaroras as the sixth nation of their confederacy (see Chapter 3), the Iroquois established a center of Native American power distinct from, but cooperative with, the British.

Indians elsewhere along the frontier of settlement likewise confronted pressures from settlers on one side and from the Iroquois on the other. Typical of these were the Catawbias of the Carolina piedmont. After the defeat of the Yamasees (whose cause the Catawbias supported) in 1716, Carolina settlers moved uncomfortably close to some Catawba villages, provoking the kind of environmental upheavals experienced earlier by Indians in New England and other settled regions (see Chapter 3). Most Catawbias abandoned these villages to join more remote Catawbias who engaged in



the deerskin trade. Having escaped the settlers, the Catawbas, however, faced rising conflict with the Iroquois, who, after making peace with the Indian allies of New France in 1701, looked south when launching raids for captives to adopt into their ranks. To counter the Iroquois, whose alliances with most of the northern colonies left them well armed, the Catawbas turned to South Carolina. By ceding land and helping defend that colony against outside Indians, the Catawbas received guns, food, and clothing. Their relationship with the English allowed the Catawbas the security they needed to strengthen their traditional institutions. However, the growing gap in numbers between them and the settlers, and their competition with the settlers for resources, made the Indians vulnerable and dependent.

### ***British Expansion in the South: Georgia***

Parliament's chartering of the colony of Georgia in 1732 represented a new expansionist thrust. Parliament intended Georgia as a refuge where bankrupt debtors would be settled on land that England had agreed, in a 1670 treaty, belonged to Spain. Meanwhile, the new colony's sponsors hoped that Georgia would flourish by exporting expensive commodities like wine and silk. Parliament even spent money to ensure the success of

the colony, which became the only North American province besides Nova Scotia in which the British government actually invested funds.

Under tough-minded James Oglethorpe (1696–1785), who dominated the provincial board of trustees, Georgia took shape slowly during its first decade. Oglethorpe founded the port of entry, Savannah, in 1733, and by 1740 a small contingent of 2,800 colonists had settled in the colony. Almost half the immigrants came from Germany, Switzerland, and Scotland, and most had their overseas passage paid by the government. A small number of Jews were among the early settlers. Georgia thus began as the least English of all the colonies. In 1740 Oglethorpe led a massive assault on Florida. Although failing to seize St. Augustine, he led 650 men in repelling 3,000 Spanish troops and refugee South Carolina slaves who counterattacked Georgia in 1742. When peace returned in 1744, Georgia's survival was assured.

Oglethorpe hated slavery and tried to ban it from Georgia. "They live like cattle," he wrote to the trustees after viewing Charles Town's slave market. "If we allow slaves, we act against the very principles by which we associated together, which was to relieve the distressed." Slavery, he thought, degraded blacks, made whites lazy, and presented a terrible risk. Oglethorpe

### **Creek Delegation to London**

*In 1734 James Oglethorpe visited London with Creek Indians who had sold him land. Here the Creeks meet with Englishmen who have invested in the Georgia colony.*





### Yuchi Ceremony, 1736

*A German visitor to Georgia painted this watercolor, which he titled *A Festival*. The guns hanging inside the shelter were probably acquired from English traders in South Carolina.*

worried that wherever whites relied on a slave labor force, they courted slave revolts, which the Spanish could then exploit. But most of all, he recognized that slavery undermined the economic position of poor whites like those he sought to settle in Georgia.

At Oglethorpe's insistence, Parliament made Georgia the only colony where slavery was forbidden. He also pushed through a requirement that landholdings be no larger than five hundred acres. These measures were aimed at keeping rural Georgia populated by white, independent farmer-soldiers, ready to leap to the colony's defense and uncorrupted by the urge to speculate in real estate or build up slave-labor plantations.

But Oglethorpe's well-intentioned plans failed completely. Few debtors arrived because Parliament set impossibly stringent conditions for their release from prison. Limitations on settlers' rights to sell or enlarge their holdings, as well as the ban on slavery, also kept settlement low. Raising exotic export crops proved impractical; as in South Carolina, only rice yielded a profit. Oglethorpe struggled against economic reality for a decade and then gave up. In 1750 the trustees finally legalized slavery, and restrictions on the market for land also fell by the wayside. As a result, Georgia boomed. The population rose from four thousand residents in 1750 (including up to a thousand slaves) to twenty-three thousand inhabitants in 1770, 45 percent of them blacks.

Having held Georgia against Spain and pushed the frontier west 150 miles, British expansion virtually

halted after 1750. Anglo-Americans would not settle beyond the Appalachians until the 1760s.

### *Spain's Struggles*

While endeavoring to maintain its empire in the face of Native American, French, and British adversaries, Spain spread its language and culture over much of North America, especially in the Southwest.

Seeking to repopulate New Mexico with settlers after the Pueblo Revolt (see Chapter 3), Spain gave land grants of approximately twenty-six square miles wherever ten or more families founded a town. Strong fortifications arose to protect against Indian attacks, now coming primarily from the Apaches. As in the early New England towns, the settlers built homes on small lots around the church plaza, farmed separate fields nearby, grazed livestock at a distance, and shared a community woodlot and pasture.

The livestock-raising *ranchos*, radiating out for many miles from little clusters of houses, monopolized vast tracts along the Rio Grande and blocked further town settlement. On the *ranchos* mounted cattle and sheep herders (*vaqueros*) created the way of life later associated with the American cowboy—featuring lariat and roping skills, cattle drives, roundups, and livestock brandings.

By 1750 the population of New Mexico numbered just 3,800 Spanish, half of them in four towns, and 8,400 Pueblo Indians (an astonishing 50 percent reduction





### French and Spanish Occupation of North America, to 1750

*French fur traders became entrenched along the Great Lakes and Upper Mississippi River between 1666 and 1700, after which they built many settlements in territory claimed by Spain along the Gulf of Mexico. Spanish colonization was concentrated in Florida, central Texas, and the Rio Grande Valley.*

since 1680). Most Pueblos now cooperated with New Mexico's government, and although many had converted to Catholicism, they also practiced their traditional religion. On the colony's borders, the Navajos and Apaches, whose raids once menaced Spanish and Pueblos alike, had made peace with New Mexico in order to gain its support against even more fearsome raids by armed and mounted Utes from the north and Comanches from the east.

Spain established Texas in order to counter growing French influence among the Comanches and other Native Americans on the southern Plains. Colonization began after 1716, when Spaniards established several outposts on the San Antonio and Guadalupe rivers. The most flourishing center was at San Antonio de Béxar, where two towns, a *presidio*, and a mission (later known as the Alamo) were clustered. But most Indians



### The Alamo

*As the center of Franciscan missionary efforts in Texas, this San Antonio church was a critical bulwark for Spain on its fragile northern frontier. It later became the symbol of Texan independence from Mexico (see Chapter 13).*

1740

## Mose, Florida

The Spanish presence in Florida was always tenuous and, after English colonists established Charles Town in Carolina in 1670, vulnerable to outside attack. During the eighteenth century Spain retained its hold in Florida by enlisting the support of Native Americans and Africans alienated by the English. In particular, by promising freedom to slaves who fled from Carolina to Florida and converted to Catholicism, the Spanish bolstered their population and defenses. The black community of Mose, established near St. Augustine in 1738, vividly demonstrated the importance of these immigrants.

Blacks had lived in Florida since the founding of St. Augustine in 1565. In

1683, after Indians armed by Carolina began attacking and capturing Florida mission Indians for sale into slavery, the Spanish colony formed a black militia unit. In 1686 fifty-three blacks and Indians conducted a counterraid into Carolina and returned with, among other prizes, thirteen of the governor's slaves. In subsequent diplomatic negotiations between the two colonies, Florida's governor, Diego de Quiroga, refused English demands that he return the blacks, instead giving them wage-paying jobs. Soon other Carolina slaves were making their way to Florida. Spain's King Charles II ruled in 1693 that all arriving slaves should be given their freedom, "so that by their example and my liberality others will do the same."

With Spain deliberately encouraging Carolina slaves to escape to Florida, the numbers rose further, especially during the Yamasee War (1715–1716), when the English were nearly crushed by a massive uprising of Indians. In 1726 a former South Carolina slave, Francisco Menéndez, was appointed to command a militia unit consisting of his fellow Carolinians to defend against an expected English invasion. The Spanish built a fortified village for Menéndez's men and their families in 1738 and called it Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mose, usually shortened to Mose, an Indian name for the location.

Mose was strategically placed just two miles north of St. Augustine, so that its residents served as both sentries and a buffer for the capital. Spanish and

## English Map of St. Augustine and Mose, 1762

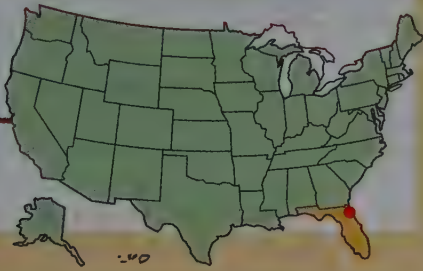
*Mose is indicated as "Negroe Fort"; "Indian Town" is a settlement of pro-Spanish Indians.*



English documents, along with recent archaeological excavations, reveal that it had sturdy earthen walls "lined round with prickly royal" (a thorny plant) and was surrounded by a moat. A stone fort was the most prominent structure inside the walls. Outside the fort the one hundred residents planted fields and gathered shellfish from the banks of a nearby saltwater stream. In a letter to the Spanish king, Florida's governor, Manuel de Montiano, praised Menéndez for having "distinguished himself in the establishment and cultivation of Mose, . . . [and] doing all he could so that the rest of his subjects, following his example, would apply themselves and learn good customs."

For its residents Mose symbolized their new status as





freed men and women. Most had been born in West Africa and then enslaved and carried to Carolina. After escaping they had lived among friendly Indians who helped them make their way to the Spanish colony. Mose was their own community, their first since being taken from Africa. In agreeing to live there, they understood the price they might have to pay. Writing to the king in 1738, they declared themselves "the most cruel enemies of the English," who were ready to shed their "last drop of blood in defense of the Great Crown of Spain and the Holy Faith."

The importance of Florida's free blacks and their town was demonstrated in 1740 when Georgia's governor, James Oglethorpe, led a massive force of Georgia and South Carolina troops, Indian allies, and seven warships in an invasion of Florida. The English captured Mose in May after all its residents were evacuated, but Menéndez's militia and other troops recaptured the town a month later in a fierce battle that helped Oglethorpe decide to withdraw. (The British called the battle Bloody Mose.) But English destruction of the town and the Spanish crown's refusal to fund its rebuilding led Mose's residents to move into St. Augustine. For twelve years they lived among the Spanish as laborers, seamen, and hunters and in other capacities. In 1752 a new governor had Mose rebuilt and ordered the blacks to return to their former town despite their express "desire to live in complete liberty." To go back to the town, which they once had cherished as a symbol of their freedom, now, after twelve years of assimilation in the capital city, seemed relegation to second-class citizenship.

In 1763 Spain ceded Florida to Britain in the Treaty of Paris (see Chapter 5). Spanish authorities evacuated the people of Mose and allotted them homesteads in Matanzas, Cuba. But the meager provisions given the blacks proved inadequate, and many, including Francisco Menéndez, soon moved to Havana. In 1783 another Treaty of Paris returned Florida to Spain (see Chapter 6), and the following year, a new Florida governor resumed the policy of granting freedom to escaped slaves. Hearing the news and recalling Florida's earlier reputation, hundreds of slaves responded. But now Spain proceeded more cautiously with the slaveholders' government to Florida's north; in 1790 U.S. Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson persuaded the Spanish to rescind the policy of granting freedom to escaped slaves. In 1819 the United States annexed Florida, and in 1845 it joined the Union as a slave state.



#### **Puerto Rican Sergeant**

*This seventeenth-century free black sergeant belonged to a Spanish militia unit in Puerto Rico, similar to the one based at Mose.*

#### **Ft. Mose Watercolor**

*Artist's reconstruction of Mose, based on archaeological and documentary evidence.*



in Texas preferred trading with the French to farming, Christianity, and the ineffective protection of the Spanish. Lack of security also deterred Hispanic settlement, so that by 1760 only 1,200 Spaniards faced periodic raids by French, Comanches, and other Indians.

Spain's position in Florida was equally precarious. After 1715 the neutrality of the Creeks enabled the Spanish to compete with the English and French in the southeastern deerskin trade, though with limited effectiveness, and to sponsor Indian counterraid into Carolina. In addition, the Spanish offered freedom to any English-owned slaves who escaped and made their way to Florida (see *A Place in Time*).

The Spanish saw Georgia's founding in 1733 as a bold new threat to Florida, and planned, but then cancelled, an invasion in 1737. When war broke out between England and Spain in 1739, the two sides attempted invasions of each other without success. Spain had resisted the English, but its reputation as "the sick man of Europe" clearly applied equally in North America.

By the mid-eighteenth century, Spain controlled much of the Southeast and Southwest, while France exercised influence in the Mississippi, Ohio, and Missouri River valleys, as well as around the Great Lakes and in Canada. Both empires, spread thin, depended heavily on Indian goodwill or acquiescence. In contrast, British North America was compact, wealthy, densely populated by non-Indians, and aggressively expansionist.

## Enlightenment and Awakening

Anglo-America was probably the world's most literate society in the eighteenth century. Perhaps 90 percent of New England's adult white male population and 40 percent of the women could write well enough to sign documents, thanks to the region's traditional support for primary education. Among white males elsewhere in the colonies, the literacy rate varied from about 35 percent to more than 50 percent. (In England, by contrast, no more than one-third of all males could read and write.) But how readily most of these people could (or would) read a book or write a letter was another matter. Ordinary Americans' reading fare at best encompassed only a few well-thumbed books: an almanac, a psalter, and the Bible. They inhabited a world of oral culture, in which ideas and information passed through the spoken word—a conversation with neighbors, an exchange of pleasantries with the local gentle-

man, a hot debate at the town meeting, a sermon by the minister. When uttered with feeling and sincerity, spoken words could move them with tremendous force.

However, members of the gentry, well-to-do merchants, educated ministers, and some self-improving artisans and farmers also lived in the world of print culture. Though costly, books, newspapers, and writing paper could open up eighteenth-century European civilization to reading men and women. And a rich, exciting world it was. Great advances in natural science seemed to explain the laws of nature; human intelligence appeared poised to triumph over ignorance and prejudice; life itself looked as if it would at last become pleasant. For those who had the time to read and think, an age of optimism and progress had dawned: the Enlightenment. Upper-class Americans could not resist its charms and could be powerfully moved by the promise of its written words.

### *The Enlightenment in America*

Anglo-American intellectuals like the self-taught scientist Benjamin Franklin drew their inspiration from Enlightenment ideals, which combined confidence in human reason with skepticism toward beliefs not founded on science or strict logic. One source of Enlightenment thought lay in the writings of English physicist Sir Isaac Newton (1642–1727), who in 1687 explained how gravitation ruled the universe. Newton's work captured Europe's imagination by demonstrating the harmony of natural laws and stimulated others to search for rational principles in medicine, law, psychology, and government.

In the second quarter of the eighteenth century, no American more fully embodied the Enlightenment spirit than Franklin. Born in Boston in 1706, Franklin migrated to Philadelphia at age seventeen. He brought along skill as a printer, considerable ambition, and insatiable intellectual curiosity. In moving to Philadelphia, Franklin put himself in the right place at the right time, for the city was growing much more rapidly than Boston and was attracting English and Scottish merchants who shared Franklin's zest for learning. These men nudged Franklin's career along by lending him books and securing him printing contracts. In 1732 Franklin began to publish *Poor Richard's Almanack*, a collection of maxims and proverbs that made him famous. By age forty-two Franklin had earned enough money to retire and devote himself to science and community service.



These dual goals—science and community benefit—were intimately related in Franklin's mind, for he believed that all true science would be useful in the sense of making everyone's life more comfortable. For example, experimenting with a kite, Franklin demonstrated in 1752 that lightning was electricity, a discovery that led to the useful lightning rod. Franklin organized the American Philosophical Society in 1743 to encourage "all philosophical experiments that let light into the nature of things, tend to increase the power of man over matter, and multiply the conveniences and pleasures of life." By 1769 this society had blossomed into an intercolonial network of amateur scientists.

Although several southern plantation owners, including Thomas Jefferson, ardently championed progress through science, the Enlightenment's primary centers in America were the seaboard cities, where the latest books and ideas from Europe circulated and gentlemen and self-improving artisans met in small societies to investigate nature. In the eyes of many of these individuals, the ideal was the Royal Society in London, the foremost learned society in the English-speaking world. In this respect, the Enlightenment, at least initially, strengthened the ties between colonial and British elites. Although confident that science would benefit everyone, the Enlightenment's followers envisioned progress as gradual and proceeding from the top down. They trusted reason far more than they trusted the common people, whose judgment, especially on religious matters, seemed too easily deranged.

Just as Newton inspired the scientific bent of Enlightenment intellectuals, English philosopher John Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690) led many to embrace "reasonable" or "rational" religion. Locke contended that ideas, including religion, are not inborn but are acquired by toilsome investigation of and reflection upon experience. To most Enlightenment intellectuals, the best argument for the existence of God seemingly could be derived through study of the harmony and order of nature, which pointed to a rational Creator. Some individuals, including Franklin and Jefferson, carried this argument a step further by insisting that where the Bible conflicted with reason, one should follow the dictates of reason rather than the Bible. Called Deists, they concluded that God, having created a perfect universe, did not miraculously intervene in its workings but rather left it alone to operate according to natural laws.

Most colonists influenced by the Enlightenment described themselves as Christians and attended church.



### Meeting of the Tuesday Club

Like Franklin's Junto and similar groups in other colonial cities, the Tuesday Club of Annapolis, Maryland, appealed to the elite white men who cultivated the literary and cultural tastes of "gentlemen."

But they feared Christianity's excesses, particularly as indulged in by those who persecuted others in religion's name, and by "enthusiasts" who emphasized emotion rather than reason in the practice of piety. Mindful of Locke's caution that a human can never be *absolutely* certain of anything but his or her own existence, they distrusted zealots. Typically, Franklin contributed money to most of the churches in Philadelphia but thought that religion's value lay in its encouragement of virtue and morality rather than in theological hair splitting.

Prior to 1740 colonial intellectuals usually associated fanaticism and bigotry with Catholics and the early

Puritans, and they looked on their own time as an era of progressive reasonableness. But a series of religious revivals known as the Great Awakening would soon shatter their complacency.

### *The Great Awakening*

Viewing the world as orderly and predictable, rationalists were inclined to a sense of smug self-satisfaction. Writing his will in 1750, Franklin thanked God for giving him “such a mind, with moderate passions” and “such a competency of this world’s goods as might make a reasonable mind easy.” But many Americans lacked a comfortable competency of worldly goods and lived neither orderly nor predictable lives. For example, in 1737 and 1738 an epidemic of diphtheria, a contagious throat disease, killed every tenth child under sixteen from New Hampshire to Pennsylvania. Such an event starkly reminded the colonists of the fragility of earthly life and turned their thoughts to religion.

Throughout the colonial period, religious fervor had occasionally quickened within a denomination or region and then died down. But in 1739, an outpouring of European Protestant revivalism spread to British North America. This “Great Awakening” cut across lines of class, status, and education. Above all, the revivals represented an unleashing of anxiety and longing among ordinary people living in a world of oral culture—anxiety about sin, and longing for salvation. And the answers that they received were conveyed through the spoken word. Some revivalists were themselves intellectuals, comfortable amid the books and ideas of the print culture. But for all, religion was primarily a matter of emotional commitment.

In contrast to rationalists, who stressed the human potential for betterment, the ministers who roused their congregations into outbursts of religious fervor during the revivals depicted the emptiness of material comfort, the utter corruption of human nature, the fury of divine wrath, and the need for immediate repentance. Although he was a brilliant thinker, well aware of contemporary philosophy and science, the Congregationalist Jonathan Edwards, who led a revival at Northampton, Massachusetts, in 1735, drove home this message with breathtaking clarity. “The God that holds you over the pit of Hell, much as one holds a spider or other loathsome insect over the fire, abhors you,” Edwards intoned in one of his famous sermons, “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.” “His wrath toward you

burns like fire; He looks upon you as worthy of nothing else but to be cast into the fire.”

Even before Edwards’s Northampton revival, two New Jersey ministers, Presbyterian William Tennent and Theodore Frelinghuysen of the Dutch Reformed Church, had stimulated conversions in prayer meetings called Refreshings. But the event that brought these various threads of revival together was the arrival in 1739 of the charismatic George Whitefield, an English clergyman who had been stoking the fires of revival in the Anglican Church. So overpowering was Whitefield’s presence that some joked that he could make crowds swoon simply by uttering “Mesopotamia.” Crowds exceeding twenty thousand could hear his booming voice clearly, and many wept at his eloquence.

Whitefield’s American tour inspired thousands to seek salvation. Most converts were young adults in their late twenties. In Connecticut alone, the number joining churches jumped from 630 in 1740 to 3,217 in 1741, and within four years of Whitefield’s arrival, every fifth man and woman under forty-five had reportedly been saved by God’s grace. Whitefield’s allure was so mighty that he even awed potential critics. Hearing him preach in Philadelphia, Benjamin Franklin first vowed to contribute nothing to the collection. But so admirably did Whitefield conclude his sermon, Franklin recalled, “that I empty’d my Pocket wholly into the Collector’s Dish, Gold and all.”

Divisions over the revivals quickly developed in Whitefield’s wake and were often exacerbated by social and economic tensions. For example, after leaving Boston in October 1740, Whitefield invited Gilbert Tennent (William’s son) to follow “in order to blow up the divine flame lately kindled there.” Denouncing Boston’s established clergymen as “dead Drones” and lashing out at aristocratic fashion, Tennent built a following among the city’s poor and downtrodden. So did the Congregationalist James Davenport, who was expelled for having said that Boston’s clergy were leading the people blindfolded to hell.

Exposing colonial society’s social divisions, Tennent and Davenport corroded support for the revivals among established ministers and officials. As Whitefield’s exchange with Alexander Garden showed, the lines hardened between the revivalists, known as New Lights, and the rationalist clergy, or Old Lights, who dominated the Anglican, Presbyterian, and Congregational Churches. In 1740 Gilbert Tennent published *The Danger of an Unconverted Ministry*, which hinted that





### Baptist Meetinghouse and Anglican Church Interiors, Eighteenth-Century Virginia

*The New Light Baptist structure (above) reflects the members' poverty as well as their preference for equality, simplicity, and intimacy in their services. The Old Light Anglican Church (right) expresses an emphasis on hierarchy, formality, and distance among members. In particular, compare the relationship of minister to congregation in each church.*



most Presbyterian ministers lacked saving grace and hence were bound for hell, and urged their parishioners to abandon them for the New Lights. By thus sowing the seeds of doubt about individual ministers, Tennent was undermining one of the foundations of social order, for if the people could not trust their own ministers, whom could they trust?

Old Light rationalists fired back. In 1742 Charles Chauncy, a well-known Boston Congregationalist, condemned the revival as an epidemic of the "enthusiasm" that Enlightened intellectuals so loathed. Chauncy particularly blasted those who mistook the ravings of their overheated imaginations for the experience of divine grace. He even provided a kind of checklist for spotting enthusiasts: look for "a certain wildness" in their eyes, the "quakings and tremblings" of their limbs, and foaming at the mouth, Chauncy suggested. Put simply, the revival had unleashed "a sort of madness."

The Great Awakening opened unprecedented splits in American Protestantism. In 1741 New and Old Light Presbyterians formed rival branches that did not reunite until 1758, when the revivalists emerged victorious. The Anglicans lost many members to New Light preachers,

especially to Presbyterians and Baptists. Congregationalists splintered so badly that within twenty years of 1740, New Lights had seceded from one-third of all New England churches and formed separate parishes.

In Massachusetts and Connecticut, where the Congregational Church was established by law, the secession of New Light parishes provoked bitter conflict. To force New Lights into paying tithes to their former church, Old Lights repeatedly denied new parishes legal status. Connecticut passed repressive laws forbidding revivalists to preach or perform marriages, and the colony expelled many New Lights from the legislature. In Connecticut's Windham County, an extra story had to be added to the jail to hold all the New Lights arrested for not paying tithes. Elisha Paine, a revivalist imprisoned at Windham for illegal preaching, continued giving sermons from his cell and drew such crowds that his followers built bleachers nearby to hear him. Paine and his fellow victims generated widespread sympathy for the New Lights, who finally won control of Connecticut's assembly in 1759.

Although New Lights made steady gains until the 1770s, the Great Awakening peaked in 1742. The revival

then crested everywhere but in Virginia, where its high point came after 1755 with an upsurge of conversions by Baptists, who also suffered legal harassment.

For all the commotion it raised at the time, the Great Awakening's long-term effects exceeded its immediate impact. First, the revival started the decline in the influence of Quakers (who were not significantly affected by the Great Awakening), Anglicans, and Congregationalists. As these churches' importance waned, the number of Presbyterians and Baptists increased after 1740, and that of Methodists (revivalist offshoots of Anglicanism) rose after 1770. Ever since the late 1700s, these three churches have dominated American Protestantism. Second, the Great Awakening stimulated the founding of new colleges, for existing colleges were scarred in their opponents' eyes by their affiliations with either Old or New Lights. In 1746 New Light Presbyterians established the College of New Jersey (Princeton). Then followed King's College (Columbia) for Anglicans in 1754, the College of Rhode Island (Brown) for Baptists in 1764, Queen's College (Rutgers) for Dutch Reformed in 1766, and Dartmouth College for Congregationalists in 1769. Third, the revival went beyond the ranks of white society to draw many African-Americans and Native Americans to Protestantism for the first time. The revivals' oral and communal dimensions, along with their emphasis on piety over intellectual learning as the key to God's grace, enabled some Africans and Native Americans to combine aspects of their traditional cultures with Protestant Christianity. The Great Awakening marked the real emergence of black Protestantism, which was almost nonexistent before 1740. New Lights reached out to slaves, some of whom joined white churches and even preached at revival meetings. Conversions came slowly, but by 1790 many blacks were Christians. Meanwhile, a few New Light preachers became missionaries to Indians still residing in the colonies. Among their converts were some Indians who had previously rejected Protestant missionaries. A few Christian Indians, such as Samson Occom, a Mohegan born in Connecticut, became widely known as preachers themselves. Despite these breakthroughs, blacks and Indians still faced considerable discrimination in colonial churches, even among New Lights.

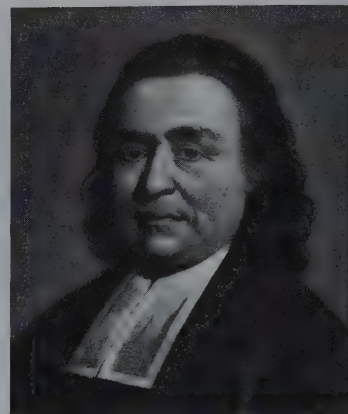
The Great Awakening also gave added prominence to women in colonial religion. For several decades ministers had singled out women—who constituted the majority of church members—as embodying the

Christian ideal of piety. Now some of the New Light churches, mostly Baptist and Congregationalist, began to grant women the right to speak and vote in church meetings. And like Anne Hutchinson a century earlier, some women moved from leading women's prayer and discussion groups to presiding over meetings that included men. One such woman, Sarah Osborn of Newport, Rhode Island, conducted "private praying Societies Male and female" that included black slaves in her home. In 1770 Osborn and her followers won a bitter fight over their congregation's choice of a new minister.

While most assertive women were prevented by detractors from exercising as much power as Osborn, none was persecuted as Hutchinson had been in Puritan New England.

Finally the revivals had the unintended effect of fostering religious toleration by blurring theological differences among New Lights. Although an Anglican who helped found Methodism, George Whitefield preached with Presbyterians such as Gilbert Tennent and Congregationalists like Jonathan Edwards. By emphasizing inner experience over doctrinal and institutional fine points, revivalism helped to prepare Americans to accept denominational pluralism, which emerged after the Revolution as the best means of accommodating religious diversity.

Historians have disagreed over whether the Great Awakening had political as well as religious effects. Although Tennent and Davenport called the poor "God's people" and flayed the wealthy, they never advocated a social revolution, and the Awakening did not produce any distinct political ideology. Yet by empowering ordinary people to criticize those in authority, the revivals



**Reverend Samson Occom, Mohegan Indian Preacher**

*Born in a wigwam in Connecticut, Occom converted to Christianity under the influence of the Great Awakening and preached to other Native Americans. But he grew disillusioned with the treatment of his people by whites and, after the American Revolution, joined an exodus of Indians from New England to upstate New York.*



laid some of the groundwork for political revolutionaries a generation later, who would contend that royal government in America had grown corrupt and unworthy of obedience.

## CONCLUSION

By the 1750s the British mainland colonies had taken on the look of mature societies. For fifty years their population and wealth had been rising impressively, and they now participated fully in the British-dominated Atlantic economy. White British colonists' standard of living far exceeded those of lower Louisiana and the Spanish colonies, and equaled that of England. The influence of Europe's Enlightenment had spread widely in the colonies, and by 1766 Anglo-America had more institutions of higher learning than England, Scotland, and Ireland together. A self-confident Anglo-American upper class had garnered expertise in law, trade, finance, and politics. The Great Awakening, with its European origins and its intercolonial appeal, further signaled the colonies' emergence from provincial isolation. Above all, the burgeoning of newspaper and book publishing, along with the proliferation of far-reaching commercial, intellectual, and religious networks, enabled eighteenth-century white colonists to identify more closely than had their predecessors with developments in Britain and in other colonies.

French and Spanish achievements on the North American mainland contrasted starkly with those of Britain. The two nations' territories were only thinly colonized, mostly on lands that were remote from the more dynamic centers of Atlantic commerce. Despite their mercantilist orientations, neither France nor Spain developed North American colonies that substantially enriched their respective home countries.

For all of its evident wealth and progress, Anglo-America was rife with tensions. In some areas, vast dis-

crepancies in the distribution of wealth and opportunities fostered a rebellious spirit among whites who were less well off. The Enlightenment and the Great Awakening revealed deep-seated religious and ideological divisions. Slave resistance and Anglo-Indian warfare demonstrated the depths of racial antagonisms. After France was vanquished and Spain further weakened in the Seven Years' War (1756–1763), these tensions fused with newly emergent differences between Britain and its colonies. The result was a revolutionary explosion.

## FOR FURTHER READING

- Bernard Bailyn and Philip D. Morgan, eds., *Strangers Within the Realm: Cultural Murgins of the First British Empire* (1991). Leading historians examine the interplay of ethnicity and empire in North America, the Caribbean, Scotland, and Ireland.
- Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (1998). A major study illuminating slave existence and culture in mainland North America, from the earliest African arrivals through the age of the American Revolution.
- Ronald Hoffman et al., eds. *Through a Glass Darkly: Reflections on Personal Identity in Early America* (1997). Essays that explore issues of personal identity for individual Americans during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.
- Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740–1790* (1982). Pulitzer Prize-winning study of class, race relations, and culture during the Great Awakening and American Revolution.
- Susan Juster, *Disorderly Women: Sexual Politics and Evangelicalism in Revolutionary New England* (1994). A major study of the gendered dimensions of the religious revivals.
- John J. McCusker and Russell R. Menard, *The Economy of British America, 1607–1789*, rev. ed. (1991). A comprehensive discussion of the economy in light of current scholarship.
- James H. Merrell, *The Indians' New World: Catawbas and Their Neighbors from European Contact Through the Era of Removal* (1989). A pathbreaking examination, with broad implications for understanding the Native American past.
- Gary B. Nash, *The Urban Crucible: Social Change, Political Consciousness, and the Origins of the American Revolution* (1979). A masterful study of social, economic, and political change in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia.

## 5

## Roads to Revolution

### 1744–1776



**The Boston Massacre, 1770, Engraving by Paul Revere**

*Shortly after this incident, one Bostonian observed that "unless there is some great alteration in the state of things, the era of the independence of the colonies is much nearer than I once thought it, or now wish it."*





**O**n the evening of March 5, 1770, an angry crowd of poor and working-class Bostonians gathered in front of the guard post outside the Boston customs house. The crowd was protesting a British soldier's abusive treatment a few hours earlier of a Boston apprentice who was trying to collect a debt from a British officer. Suddenly shots rang out, and when the smoke and dust had cleared, five Bostonians lay dead and six more were wounded. Among those in the crowd was an impoverished, twenty-eight-year-old shoemaker named George Robert Twelves Hewes. Hewes had joined earlier Boston crowds in their protests against British authorities, but it was the "Boston Massacre" (facing page), as the shooting became known, that led Hewes to see his and the other protesters' actions in political terms. Four of the five dead men were personal friends; he himself had received a serious blow to the shoulder from a soldier's rifle butt; and he had had an earlier run-in with the guards' arrogant commanding officer. Over the next several days, Hewes attended meetings and signed public petitions denouncing British conduct in the shooting, and he later testified against the soldiers. Thereafter he participated far more prominently in such anti-British actions as the Boston Tea Party.

How did it come to be that British troops were stationed on the streets of Boston in 1770? What had brought those troops and the city's citizens to the verge of war? And what led obscure, humble people like George Robert Twelves Hewes to become angry political activists in an age when the lowborn were expected to defer to their social superiors? The Boston Massacre was but one of a long chain of events that resulted finally in the complete rupture of Britain's relationship with its American colonies.

The conflict between Britain and the colonies arose suddenly after 1763, when Parliament attempted to reorganize its suddenly enlarged empire by tightening

control over economic and political affairs in the colonies. Long accustomed to benefiting economically from the empire while legislating for themselves, colonists were shocked by this unexpected effort to centralize decision making in London. Many colonial leaders, such as Benjamin Franklin, interpreted Britain's clampdown as calculated antagonism, intended to deprive the colonists of their prosperity and their relative independence. Others, such as Massachusetts lieutenant governor and chief justice, Thomas Hutchinson, stressed the importance of maintaining order and authority.

For many ordinary colonists like Hewes, however, the conflict was more than a constitutional crisis. In the port cities, crowds of poor and working people engaged in direct, often violent demonstrations against British authority. Sometimes they acted in concert with elite radicals; at other times, in defiance. Settlers in the remote backcountry of several colonies invoked the language and ideas of urban radicals when resisting the monopolies of large landowners and the policies of colonial governments dominated by seaboard elites. These movements reflected social-economic tensions within the colonies and the emergence of distinctly nonelite views on the crisis. By the same token, the growing participation of white women in colonial resistance brought to the fore yet another perspective on the crisis. Moreover, colonial protests did not arise in a vacuum but rather drew from ideas and opposition movements in Britain and elsewhere in Europe.

Taken as a whole, colonial resistance involved many kinds of people with many outlooks. It arose most immediately from a constitutional crisis within the British Empire, but it also reflected deep democratic stirrings in America and in the Atlantic world generally. These stirrings would erupt in the American Revolution, beginning in 1776, then in the French Revolution, which began in 1789, and spread subse-



### The Female Combatants, 1776

*Britain, the fashionable mother, tries to subdue her rebellious daughter, America, an Indian princess.*

quently over much of Europe and the Americas.

Despite their apprehension over parliamentary taxes, colonial politicians usually expressed their opposition peacefully from 1763 to 1775, through such tactics as legislative resolutions and commercial boycotts. Few lost their lives during the twelve years prior to the battles at Lexington and Concord, the first military clashes of the Revolution, and all of those killed were American civilians rather than royal officials or soldiers. Even after fighting broke

out, some colonists agonized for more than a year over whether to sever their political relationship with England—which even native-born Americans sometimes referred to affectionately as “home.” Of all the world’s colonial peoples, none became rebels more reluctantly than did Anglo-Americans in 1776.

This chapter focuses on four major questions:

- ◆ How and why did the Seven Years’ War lead to a rupture between Britain and its North American colonies?
- ◆ What were the fundamental differences between British officials and their colonial opponents with respect to the status and role of the colonies within the British Empire?
- ◆ In what ways did protests against British policies affect political life *within* the colonies?
- ◆ How did colonial protesters overcome the distinct histories and identities of the various colonies to mount a united front against British policies?

## Imperial Warfare

After 1713, when Queen Anne’s War ended, the American colonies enjoyed a generation of peace as well as prosperity. The peace was shattered in 1739 by an Anglo-Spanish war in the Southeast that quickly merged with a second one in central Europe, the War of the

Austrian Succession, known as King George’s War in British America (1740–1748). After a “diplomatic revolution” in which Austria dropped its alliance with Britain for one with France, leading Britain to align with Prussia, the conflict resumed as the Seven Years’ War (1756–1763). In both wars the Anglo-French conflict was fought not in Europe but on the high seas; in India (where the two powers competed for influence among local rulers); and in North America. Although these conflicts originated in rivalries among the great powers of Europe, few colonists doubted that King George’s War was also *their war*, or that their prosperity depended on a British victory in the Seven Years’ War.

### King George’s War

King George’s War largely followed the pattern of earlier conflicts under William and Mary and Queen Anne (see Chapter 4). Few battles involved more than six hundred men, and most of the skirmishes consisted of raids and counterattacks in the Northeast, in which many civilians were killed and others captured, especially by French and Indians attacking New England frontier towns. Although prisoners were exchanged at the end of each conflict, some captives, particularly women and children, elected to remain with the French or Indians.

King George’s War produced just one major engagement. In 1745 almost four thousand New Englanders under William Pepperell of Maine besieged and, after seven weeks of intense, heroic fighting, captured the French bastion of Louisbourg, which guarded the entrance to the St. Lawrence River. But after three more years of inconclusive warfare, Britain and France signed the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748, exchanging Louisbourg for a British outpost in India that the French had taken during the war. The memory of how their stunning achievement at Louisbourg went for naught would rankle the colonists for a decade.

### A Fragile Peace

King George’s War failed to establish either Britain or France as the dominant power in North America, and each side soon began preparations for another war. Although there were many points of contention between the two powers, it was the Ohio Valley that became the tinderbox for conflict.

For more than half a century, the region had attracted refugee Indians—Delawares from Pennsylvania, Shawnees returning to their homeland from Penn-



## CHRONOLOGY

- 1744–1748** King George's War (in Europe, the War of Austrian Succession, 1740–1748).
- 1755–1760** Seven Years' War (in Europe, 1756–1763).
- 1760** George III becomes king of Great Britain.  
Massachusetts controversy over writs of assistance.
- 1763–1766** Indian uprising in Ohio Valley and Great Lakes.
- 1763** Proclamation of 1763.
- 1764** Sugar Act.
- 1765** Stamp Act.  
First Quartering Act.  
Loyal Nine formed in Boston to oppose the Stamp Act.  
Sons of Liberty band together throughout the colonies.  
Stamp Act Congress.  
Colonists begin boycott of British goods.
- 1766** Stamp Act repealed.  
Declaratory Act.
- 1767** New York Suspending Act.  
Revenue Act (Townshend duties).  
John Dickinson, *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*.  
American Board of Customs Commissioners created.
- 1768** Massachusetts "circular letter."  
Boston merchants adopt the colonies' first nonimportation agreement.  
John Hancock's ship *Liberty* seized by Boston customs commissioner.  
British troops arrive in Boston.  
First Treaty of Fort Stanwix.  
John Wilkes elected to Parliament; arrested.  
St. George's Fields Massacre in London.
- 1770** Townshend duties, except tea tax, repealed.  
Boston Massacre.
- 1771** Battle of Alamance Creek in North Carolina.
- 1772** Committees of correspondence begin in Massachusetts and rapidly spread.
- 1773** Tea Act.  
Boston Tea Party.  
Lord Dunmore's War.
- 1774** Coercive Acts.  
Quebec Act.  
First Continental Congress meets in Philadelphia and adopts Suffolk Resolves.  
Continental Association.
- 1775** Battles of Lexington and Concord.  
Second Continental Congress meets.  
Olive Branch Petition.  
Battles at Breed's Hill and Bunker Hill.
- 1776** Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*.  
Declaration of Independence.

sylvania and South Carolina, and others driven there by colonial expansion and fur-trade rivalries (see Chapter 4). Even some Iroquois, eager for new trading opportunities, had moved to the area, where they became known as Mingos. Initially welcomed as trade partners and bulwarks against English expansion, these Indians increasingly irritated the French by their independence, in particular the willingness of some to deal with Pennsylvania traders and even to fight against the French in King George's War. The French derided these Indians as "republicans" for their defiance of all outside authority—French, English, and Iroquois.

For the next decade and a half, the "republican" Indians sought to balance the English and French against each other while the two powers grew ever less patient with the Indians' neutrality. After the war Virginia pressured some Iroquois leaders into ceding land occupied

by Delawares so that the colony's agents could build a fortified trading post at the junction of the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers—the site of modern Pittsburgh. As a result the Delawares and other "republican" Indians began to fear that the English were the greater threat to their independence.

By 1752 the Ohio Valley was the subject of competing claims by Virginia, Pennsylvania, France, and the Iroquois, as well as by the Indians who actually lived there. The next year the French began building a chain of forts in order to recapture control of trade with the Indians from Virginians and Pennsylvanians. Virginia retaliated by sending a twenty-one-year-old surveyor and speculator, George Washington, to force the French out through either persuasion or force. But in 1754, French troops drove Washington and his militiamen back to their homes.



### **"Join, or Die," 1754**

*Benjamin Franklin published this well-known cartoon just before the Albany Congress convened. The snake symbolized the colonies' considerable divisions—a disunity that political leaders would have to struggle against in years to come.*

Sensing the need to resolve differences among themselves and to restore the confidence of the Indians, delegates from seven colonies north of Virginia gathered in mid-1754 at Albany, New York, to lay plans for their mutual defense. By showering the wavering Iroquois with thirty wagonloads of presents, the colonists kept them neutral for the moment. (But virtually all Indians in Ohio itself now supported the French.) The delegates then endorsed a proposal for a colonial confederation, the so-called Albany Plan of Union, largely based on the ideas of Pennsylvania's Franklin and Massachusetts's Thomas Hutchinson. The plan called for a "Grand Council" representing all the colonial assemblies, with a crown-appointed "president general" as its executive officer. The Grand Council would devise policies regarding military defense and Indian affairs, and, if necessary, it could demand funds from the colonies according to an agreed-upon formula. Although it provided a precedent for later American unity, the Albany Plan came to nothing, primarily because no colonial legislature would surrender the least control over its powers of taxation, even to fellow Americans and in the face of grave mutual danger.

### ***The Seven Years' War in America***

Although France and Britain remained at peace in Europe until 1756, Washington's 1754 clash with French troops created a virtual state of war in North America. In response, the British dispatched General Edward

Braddock and a thousand regular troops to North America to take Fort Duquesne at the headwaters of the Ohio.

Stiff-necked and scornful of colonial soldiers as well as Native Americans, Braddock expected his disciplined British regulars to make short work of the enemy and only dimly perceived the strength and resourcefulness of the forces gathering against him. On July 9, 1755, about 850 French, Canadians, and Indians ambushed Braddock's force of 2,200 Britons and Virginians nine miles east of Fort Duquesne. Riddled by three hours of steady fire from an unseen foe, Braddock's troops retreated. Nine hundred regular and provincial soldiers died in Braddock's defeat, including the general himself, compared to just twenty-three on the French and Indian side.

Following this engagement, Indian raids convulsed Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and even parts of New Jersey—all colonies that had escaped attack in previous wars.

Confronted by the numerically superior but disorganized Anglo-Americans, the French seized Fort Oswego on Lake Ontario in 1756 and took Fort William Henry on Lake George in 1757. The French now threatened central New York and western New England. In Europe, too, the war was going badly for Britain, which by 1757 seemed to be facing defeat on all fronts.

In this dark hour, two developments turned the tide for the British. First, the Iroquois and most Ohio Indians, sensing that the French were gaining too decisive an advantage, agreed at a treaty conference at Easton, Pennsylvania, in 1758 to abandon their support of the French. Their subsequent withdrawal from Fort Duquesne enabled the British to capture it and other French forts. Although some Indians stayed out of the fighting, others actively joined the British cause.

The second decisive development occurred when William Pitt took control of military affairs in the British cabinet and reversed the downward course. Imaginative and single-minded in his conception of Britain's imperial destiny, Pitt saw himself as the man of the hour. "I know," he declared, "that I can save this country and that no one else can." True to his word, Pitt reinvigorated British patriotism throughout the empire. By the war's end, he was the colonists' most popular hero, the symbol of what Americans and the English could accomplish when united.

Hard pressed in Europe by France and its allies (which included Spain after 1761), Pitt chose not to send large numbers of additional troops to America.





### The Seven Years' War in America

After experiencing major defeats early in the war, Anglo-American forces turned the tide against the French by taking Fort Duquesne in late 1757 and Louisbourg in 1758. After Canada fell in 1760, the fighting shifted to Spain's Caribbean colonies.

Rather, he believed that the key to crushing New France lay in the mobilization of colonial soldiers. To encourage the colonies to assume the military burden, he promised that if they raised the necessary men, Parliament would bear most of the cost of fighting the war.

Pitt's offer to free Anglo-Americans from the war's financial burdens generated unprecedented support. The colonies organized more than forty thousand troops in 1758–1759, far more soldiers than the crown sent to the mainland during the entire war. The impact of Pitt's decision was immediate. Anglo-American troops under General Jeffery Amherst captured Fort

Duquesne and Louisbourg by late 1758 and drove the French from northern New York the next year. In September 1759 Quebec fell after General James Wolfe defeated the French commander-in-chief, Louis Joseph Montcalm, on the Plains of Abraham outside that city, where both commanders died in battle. French resistance ended in 1760, when Montreal surrendered.

France ceded all its territories on the North American mainland by the Treaty of Paris of 1763, which officially ended the Seven Years' War in both America and Europe. As a result, several thousand French colonists, stretching from Quebec to Illinois to Louisiana, became



### **New British Fort, 1759**

*After the French abandoned Crown Point on Lake Champlain, British troops occupied it and built a greatly expanded fortress. This watercolor was painted by a British officer.*

British and Spanish subjects. But the most adversely affected Franco-Americans were the Acadians, who had been nominal British subjects since England took over Acadia in 1713 and renamed it Nova Scotia. At the war's outbreak, Nova Scotia's government ordered all Acadians to swear loyalty to Britain and not to bear arms for France. After most refused to take the oath, soldiers drove them from their homes—often with nothing more than they could carry in their arms—and burned their villages. Almost 5 percent of Canada's population was eventually deported in this way to the British colonies, especially Maryland and Pennsylvania. But facing poverty and intense anti-French, anti-Catholic prejudice, most Acadians moved on to Louisiana. There they became known as Cajuns.

Under terms of the Treaty of Paris, France gave Britain all of its lands east of the Mississippi and transferred title to its claims west of that river to Spain, which also gained New Orleans. In return for Cuba, which a British expedition had taken over in 1762, Spain ceded Florida to Britain. Spain's vast American empire thus remained intact, but France's formerly extensive holdings were reduced to a few tiny fishing islands off Newfoundland and several thriving sugar islands in the West Indies. Britain reigned supreme in eastern North America.

King George's War and the Seven Years' War produced an ironically mixed effect. On one hand, they

fused the bonds between the British and the Anglo-Americans. Fighting side by side, shedding their blood in common cause, the British and the American colonists came to rely on each other as rarely before. At the same time, the conclusion of each war planted the seeds first of misunderstanding, then of suspicion, and finally of hostility between the two former compatriots.

## **Imperial Reorganization**

Following the Seven Years' War, Britain sought to finance its greatly expanded empire through a series of revenue measures imposed on Britons and colonists alike, and to exercise more direct control over its colonies. Opposition movements arose in Britain and in its mainland colonies, from Massachusetts to Georgia, to protest not only the new measures' economic costs but what many people regarded as a dangerous extension of tyrannical power. In America this confrontation quickly escalated into a principled conflict over the colonies' relationship with Parliament in Britain.

The new revenue measures coincided with the beginning of the reign of George III (ruled 1760–1820), who ascended to the throne at age twenty-two. In contrast to his immediate predecessors, George I and George II, who had been largely content to let veteran



politicians run the country, the new king distrusted the British political establishment. He was determined to have a strong influence on government policy, but he wished to reign as a constitutional monarch who cooperated with Parliament and worked through prime ministers. However, neither his experience, his temperament, nor his philosophy suited George III to the formidable task of selecting satisfactory prime ministers to oversee the passage of imperial laws. Clashes of personality and policy prompted the king to make frequent abrupt changes in government leadership at the very time Britain was trying to implement a massive reorganization of its empire.

### ***Friction Among Allies***

An extraordinary coalition of Britons, colonists, and Native Americans had achieved the victory over France in North America. But the return of peace brought deep-seated tensions among these allies back to the surface.

During the war, British officers regularly complained about the quality of colonial troops, not only their inability to fight but also their tendency to return home—even in the midst of campaigns—when their terms were up or when they were not paid on time. For their part, colonial soldiers complained of British officers who, as one put it, contemptuously treated their troops “but little better than slaves.”

Tensions between British officers and colonial civilians also flared, with officers complaining about colonists’ unwillingness to provide food and shelter and colonists resenting the officers’ arrogant manners. One general groused that South Carolina planters were “extremely pleased to have Soldiers to protect their Plantations but will feel no inconveniences for them.” Quakers in the Pennsylvania assembly, acting from their pacifist convictions, refused to vote funds to support the war effort, while assemblies in New York and Massachusetts opposed the quartering of British troops on their soil as an encroachment on their English liberties. English authorities regarded such actions as affronts to the king’s prerogative and as stifling Britain’s efforts to defend its territories.

Pitt’s promise to reimburse the colonial assemblies for their military expenses also angered many Britons, who concluded that the colonists were escaping scot-free from the war’s financial burden. The colonies had already profited enormously from the war, as military contracts and spending by British troops brought an influx of British currency into the hands of farmers, arti-



**George III**, Studio of A. Ramsay, c. 1767

*Although unsure of himself and emotionally little more than a boy upon his accession to the English throne, George III possessed a deep moral sense and a fierce determination to rule as well as to reign.*

sans, and merchants. Some colonial merchants, moreover, had continued their illicit trade with the French West Indies during the conflict, so that they were not only violating the Navigation Acts but trading with the enemy. Meanwhile, Britain’s national debt had nearly doubled during the war, from £72 million to over £132 million. At a time when the total debt of all the colonies collectively amounted to £2 million, the interest charges alone on the British debt came to more than £4 million a year. This debt was assumed by British landowners through a land tax and, increasingly, by ordinary consumers through excise duties on a wide variety of items, including beer, tea, salt, and bread.

But many colonists felt equally burdened. Those who profited during the war spent their additional incomes on goods imported from Britain, the annual



### Queen Anne Dining Room

*Virtually everything in this recreated dining room was imported from England. Whereas early colonial houses were devoted entirely to feeding and sheltering family members, eighteenth-century elite houses featured specialized rooms including lavishly furnished dining rooms for entertainment.*

value of which doubled during the war's brief duration. Along with a parallel movement in Britain, the consumption of tea, wine, mass-produced textiles, ceramics, and metalware by members of the middle class was fueling Britain's economy, particularly its manufacturing sector. And it was transforming the habits and tastes of thousands of people who previously had made or purchased locally nearly everything they consumed. But the wartime boom in the colonies ended as abruptly as it had begun when peace returned in 1760. To maintain their new middle-class lifestyles, colonists went into debt. British creditors obliged their American merchant customers by extending the usual period for remitting payments from six months to a year. Nevertheless, many recently prosperous colonists suddenly found themselves overloaded with debts and in many cases bankrupt. As colonial indebtedness to Britain grew, some Americans began to suspect the British of deliberately plotting to "enslave" the colonies.

Victory over the French did not end the British need for revenue, for the settlement of the war spurred new Anglo-Indian conflicts that drove the British debt even higher. With the French vanquished, Ohio and Great Lakes Indians recognized that they could no longer play the two imperial rivals off against each other. Their

fears that the British would treat them as subjects rather than allies were confirmed when General Jeffrey Amherst, Britain's commander in North America, decided to cut expenses by refusing to distribute food, ammunition, and other gifts. Moreover, squatters from the colonies were moving onto Indian lands in some areas and harassing the occupants, and many Indians feared that the British occupation was intended to support these incursions.

As tensions mounted, a Delaware religious prophet named Neolin attracted a large following by calling for a complete repudiation by Indians of European culture, material goods, and alliances. Meanwhile, other Native Americans hoped that the French would return so they could once again manipulate an imperial balance of power. Political leaders such as Pontiac, an Ottawa Indian, drew on these sentiments to forge an explicitly anti-British movement. During the spring and summer of 1763, they and their followers sacked eight British forts near the Great Lakes and besieged two others at Pittsburgh and Detroit. But over the next three years, shortages of food and ammunition, a smallpox epidemic (triggered when British officers at Fort Pitt deliberately distributed infected blankets at a peace parley), and a recognition that the French would not return led the Indians to make peace with Britain.



Although word of the uprising spread to Indians in the Southeast and Mississippi Valley, the effective diplomacy of British agent John Stuart prevented violence from erupting in these areas.

Despite the uprising's failure, the Native Americans had not been decisively defeated. Hoping to conciliate the Indians and end the frontier fighting, the British government issued the Proclamation of 1763, by which it asserted direct control of land transactions, settlement, trade, and other activities of non-Indians west of the Appalachian crest. The government's goal was to restore order to the process of colonial expansion by replacing the authority of the various (and often competing) colonies with that of the crown. The proclamation recognized existing Indian land titles everywhere west of the "proclamation line" until such time as tribal governments agreed to cede their land through treaties. Although calming Indian fears, the proclamation angered the colonies by subordinating their western claims to imperial authority and by slowing expansion.

The uprising was also a factor in the British government's decision that ten thousand soldiers should remain in North America to occupy its new territories and to intimidate the Indian, French, and Spanish inhabitants. But the burden of maintaining control over the western territories would reach almost half a million pounds a year, fully 6 percent of Britain's peacetime budget. Britons considered it perfectly reasonable for the colonists to help offset this expense, which the colonists, however, saw as none of their responsibility. Although the troops would help to offset the colonies' unfavorable balance of payments with Britain, they appeared to many Americans as a "standing army" that in peacetime could only threaten their liberty. With the French menace to their security removed, increasing numbers of colonists saw westward expansion onto Indian lands as a way to prosperity, and they viewed British troops, enforcing the Proclamation of 1763, as hindering rather than enhancing that expansion.

### *The Writs of Assistance*

Even before the Seven Years' War was over, British authorities began attempts to halt American merchants from trading with the enemy in the French West Indies. In 1760 the royal governor of Massachusetts authorized revenue officers to employ a document called a writ of assistance to seize illegally imported goods. The writ was a general search warrant that permitted customs



### **European Powers in North America 1763**

*The Treaty of Paris (1763) divided France's North American empire between Britain and Spain. Hoping to prevent unnecessary violence between whites and Indians, Britain forbade any new white settlements west of the Appalachians' crest in the Proclamation of 1763.*

officials to enter any ships or buildings where smuggled goods might be hidden. Because the document required no evidence of probable cause for suspicion, most English legal authorities considered it unconstitutional. The writ of assistance also threatened the traditional respect accorded the privacy of a family's place of residence, since most merchants conducted business from their homes.

Writs of assistance proved a powerful weapon against smuggling. In quick reaction to the writs, merchants in Boston, virtually the smuggling capital of the colonies, hired lawyer James Otis to challenge the constitutionality of these warrants. Arguing his case before the Massachusetts supreme court in 1761, Otis

proclaimed that “an act against the Constitution is void”—even one passed by Parliament. But the court, influenced by the opinion of Chief Justice Thomas Hutchinson, who noted the use of identical writs in England, ruled against the Boston merchants.

Despite losing the case, Otis expressed with absolute clarity the fundamental conception of many, both in Britain and in the colonies, of Parliament’s role under the British constitution. The British constitution was not a written document but a collection of customs and accepted principles that guaranteed certain rights to all citizens. Most British politicians assumed that Parliament’s laws were themselves part of the constitution and hence that Parliament could alter the constitution at will. Like other colonists, Otis contended that Parliament possessed no authority to violate any of the traditional “rights of Englishmen,” and he asserted that there were limits “beyond which if Parliaments go, their Acts bind not.”

### *The Sugar Act*

In 1764, just three years after Otis’s court challenge, Parliament passed the Sugar Act. The measure’s goal was to raise revenues that would help offset Britain’s military expenses in North America, and thus end Britain’s long-standing policy of exempting colonial trade from revenue-raising measures. The Navigation Acts had not been designed to bring money into the British treasury but rather to benefit the imperial economy indirectly, by stimulating trade and protecting English manufacturers from foreign competition. The taxes that Parliament levied on colonial products entering Britain were paid by English importers who passed them on to consumers; they were not taxes paid by American producers. So little revenue did the Navigation Acts bring in (just £1,800 in 1763) that they did not even pay for the cost of their own enforcement.

The Sugar Act amended the old Molasses Act of 1733 (see Chapter 4), which amounted to a tariff on French West Indian molasses entering British North America. But colonists simply continued to import the cheaper French molasses, bribing customs officials into taking 1½ pence per gallon to look the other way when it was unloaded. Aware of the widespread bribery, Parliament assumed, erroneously, that rum drinkers could stomach a threepence duty per gallon.

New taxes were not the only feature of the Sugar Act objectionable to American merchants. The act also stipulated that colonists could export lumber, iron,

skins, and many other commodities to foreign countries only if the shipments landed first in Britain. Previously, American ships had taken these products directly to the Netherlands or the German states, where captains purchased local goods and then returned directly to the colonies. By channeling this trade through Britain, Parliament hoped that colonial shippers would purchase more *imperial* wares for the American market and buy fewer goods from foreign competitors.

The Sugar Act also vastly complicated the requirements for shipping colonial goods. A captain now had to fill out a confusing series of documents to certify his trade as legal, and the absence of any of them left his entire cargo liable to seizure. The law’s petty regulations made it virtually impossible for many colonial shippers to avoid committing technical violations of the Sugar Act, even if they traded in the only manner possible under local circumstances.

Finally, the Sugar Act disregarded many traditional English protections for a fair trial. First, the law allowed customs officials to transfer smuggling cases from the colonial courts, in which juries decided the outcome, to vice-admiralty courts, where a judge alone gave the verdict. Because the Sugar Act (until 1768) awarded vice-admiralty judges 5 percent of any confiscated cargo, judges had a financial incentive to find defendants guilty. Second, until 1767 the law did not permit defendants to be tried where their offense allegedly had taken place (usually their home province) but required all cases to be heard in the vice-admiralty court at Halifax, Nova Scotia. Third, the law reversed normal courtroom procedures, which presumed innocence until guilt was proved, by requiring the defendant to disprove the prosecution’s charge.

The Sugar Act was no idle threat. British prime minister George Grenville ordered the navy to enforce the measure, and it did so vigorously. A Boston resident complained in 1764 that “no vessel hardly comes in or goes out but they find some pretense to seize and detain her.” That same year, Pennsylvania’s chief justice reported that customs officers were extorting fees from small boats carrying lumber across the Delaware River to Philadelphia from New Jersey and seemed likely “to destroy this little River-trade.”

Rather than pay the threepence tax, Americans continued smuggling molasses until 1766. Then, to discourage smuggling, Britain lowered the duty to a penny—less than the customary bribe American shippers paid to get their cargoes past inspectors. The law thereafter raised about £30,000 annually in revenue.



Opposition to the Sugar Act remained fragmented and ineffective. The law's burden fell overwhelmingly on Massachusetts, New York, and Pennsylvania; other provinces had little interest in resisting a measure that did not affect them directly. In the end, the Sugar Act's immediate impact was minor. Soon a far more controversial issue would overshadow it—the Stamp Act.

### *The Stamp Act*

The revenue raised by the Sugar Act did little to ease Britain's financial crisis. The national debt continued to rise, and the British public groaned under the weight of the second-highest tax rates in Europe. Particularly irritating to Britons was the fact that by 1765 their rates averaged 26 shillings per person, whereas the colonial tax burden varied from ½ to 1½ shillings per inhabitant, or barely 2–6 percent of the British rate. Well aware of how lightly the colonists were taxed, Grenville thought that fairness demanded a larger contribution to the empire's expenses in North America.

To raise such revenues, Parliament passed the Stamp Act in March 1765. The law obliged colonists to purchase and use special stamped (watermarked) paper for newspapers, customs documents, various licenses, college diplomas, as well as legal forms used for recovering debts, buying land, and making wills. As with the Sugar Act, any violators would face prosecution in vice-admiralty courts, without juries. The prime minister projected yearly revenues of £60,000 to £100,000, which would offset 12–20 percent of North American military expenses. Unlike the Sugar Act, which was an *external* tax—one levied on imports as they entered the colonies—the Stamp Act was an *internal* tax, or a duty levied directly on property, goods, and government services in the colonies. Whereas external taxes were intended to regulate trade and fell mainly on merchants and ship captains, internal taxes were designed to raise revenue for the crown and had far wider effects. In the case of the Stamp Act, anyone who made a will, transferred property, borrowed money, or bought playing cards or newspapers would pay the tax.

To Grenville and his supporters, the new tax seemed a small price for the benefits of the empire, especially since Britons had been paying a similar tax since 1695. Nevertheless, some in England, most notably William Pitt, objected in principle to Britain's levying an internal tax on the colonies. They emphasized that the colonists had never been subject to

British revenue bills and noted that they taxed themselves through their own elected assemblies.

Grenville and his followers agreed that Parliament could not tax any British subjects unless they enjoyed representation in that body. But they contended that Americans shared the same status as the majority of British adult males who either lacked sufficient property to vote or lived in large cities which had no seats in Parliament. Such people were considered to be “virtually” represented in Parliament.

The theory of virtual representation held that every member of Parliament stood above the narrow interests of his constituents and considered the welfare of *all* subjects when deciding issues. By definition, then, no Briton was represented by any particular individual in the House of Commons, but rather all imperial subjects, including Americans, could depend on each member of Parliament to protect their well-being.

Grenville and his supporters also denied that the colonists were entitled to any exemption from British taxation because they elected their own assemblies. These legislative bodies were allegedly no different from English or Scottish town councils, whose local powers to pass laws and taxes did not nullify Parliament's authority over them. Accordingly, colonial assemblies were an adaptation to unique American circumstances and possessed no more power than Parliament allowed them to exercise. But Grenville's position clashed directly with the stance of many colonists who had been arguing for several decades that their assemblies exercised legislative powers equivalent to those of the House of Commons in Great Britain (see Chapter 4).

To many colonists the Stamp Act seemed to force them either to confront the issue of parliamentary taxation head-on or to surrender any claim to meaningful rights of self-government. However much they might admire and respect Parliament, few colonists imagined that it represented them. They accepted the theory of virtual representation as valid for England and Scotland



### **Tax Stamps**

*Under the Stamp Act, all legal and commercial documents had to bear tax stamps such as the one shown here in close-up.*

but denied that it could be extended to the colonies. Instead they argued that they enjoyed a substantial measure of self-governance similar to that of Ireland, whose Parliament alone could tax its people but could not interfere with laws, like the Navigation Acts, passed by the British Parliament. In a speech before the Boston town meeting opposing the Sugar Act, James Otis expressed Americans' basic argument: "that by [the British] Constitution, every man in the dominions is a free man: that no parts of His Majesty's dominions can be taxed without consent: that every part has a right to be represented in the supreme or some subordinate legislature." In essence, the colonists assumed that the empire was a loose federation in which their legislatures possessed considerable autonomy, rather than an extended nation governed directly from London.

### *Resisting the Stamp Act*

Unlike the Sugar Act, the Stamp Act generated a political storm that rumbled through all the colonies in 1765. To many colonists Parliament's passage of the Stamp Act demonstrated both its indifference to their interests and the shallowness of the theory of virtual representation. Colonial agents in London had lobbied against passage of the law, and provincial legislatures had sent petitions—carefully worded statements of principle—warning against passage, but all to no avail. Parliament had dismissed the petitions without a hearing. Parliament "must have thought us Americans all a parcel of Apes and very tame Apes too," concluded Christopher Gadsden of South Carolina, "or they would have never ventured on such a hateful, baneful experiment."

In late May 1765, Patrick Henry, a twenty-nine-year-old Virginia lawyer with a talent for fiery oratory, dramatically conveyed the rising spirit of resistance. Henry persuaded the Virginia House of Burgesses to adopt several strongly worded resolutions denying Parliament's power to tax the colonies, and in the debate over the resolutions, the Speaker of the House cut him off just short of his uttering a treasonous wish that "some good American would stand up for his country"—presumably by assassinating the British tyrant responsible. Rather garbled accounts of Henry's resolutions electrified other Americans, and by the year's end, eight other colonial legislatures took a firm stand against British taxation.

Meanwhile, grass-roots resistance to the law was taking shape. In Boston by late summer, a group of

mostly middle-class artisans, shopkeepers, and businessmen joined together as the Loyal Nine to fight the Stamp Act. They recognized that the stamp distributors, who alone could accept money for watermarked paper, were the law's weak link. If the public could pressure them into resigning before taxes became due on November 1, the Stamp Act would become inoperable. The Loyal Nine would propel Boston to the forefront of resistance.

It was no accident that Boston set the pace in opposing Parliament. Bostonians lived primarily by trade and distilling, and in 1765 they were not living well. No other port suffered so much from the Sugar Act's trade restrictions. The law burdened rum producers with a heavy tax on molasses, dried up a flourishing business of importing Portuguese wines, and prohibited the direct export of many New England products to profitable overseas markets. The city, moreover, was still struggling to recover from a great fire in 1760 that had burned 176 warehouses and left every tenth family homeless.

Widespread economic distress produced an explosive situation in Boston. A large segment of its population blamed British policies for the town's hard times. The situation was unusually dangerous because Bostonians were accustomed to forming large crowds to engage in pointed but symbolic political expression. The high point of each year was November 5, Guy Fawkes Day, when thousands gathered to commemorate the failure of a Catholic plot in England in 1605 to blow up Parliament and kill King James I. On that day each year, crowds from the North End and the South End customarily burned gigantic effigies of the pope as well as of local political leaders and other elite figures, and generally satirized the behavior of the "better sort." High spirits sometimes overflowed into violent confrontations in which the two crowds battled each other with fists, stones, and barrel staves. In August 1765 the Loyal Nine oversaw a truce between the two groups that united them under a South End shoemaker named Ebenezer MacIntosh.

The morning of August 14 found a likeness of Boston's stamp distributor, Andrew Oliver, swinging from a tree guarded by a menacing crowd. Oliver apparently did not realize that the Loyal Nine were warning him to resign immediately, so at dusk MacIntosh and several hundred followers demolished a new building of Oliver's at the dock. Thereafter, the Loyal Nine withdrew and the crowd continued on its own. The



men surged toward Oliver's house, where they ceremoniously beheaded his effigy and "stamped" it to pieces. The crowd then shattered the windows of his home, smashed his furniture, and even tore out the paneling. When Lieutenant Governor Thomas Hutchinson and the sheriff tried to disperse the crowd, they were driven off under a barrage of rocks. Surveying his devastated home the next morning, Oliver announced his resignation.

Bitterness against the Stamp Act unleashed spontaneous, contagious violence. Twelve days after the first Boston riot, Bostonians demolished the elegant home of Thomas Hutchinson. This attack occurred in part because smugglers held grudges against Hutchinson for certain decisions he had given as chief justice and also because many financially pinched citizens saw him as a symbol of the royal policies crippling Boston's already troubled economy and their own livelihoods. In their view, wealthy officials "rioted in luxury," with homes and fancy furnishings that cost hundreds of times the annual incomes of most Boston working men. They were also reacting to Hutchinson's efforts to stop the destruction of his brother-in-law Andrew Oliver's house. Ironically, Hutchinson privately opposed the Stamp Act.

Meanwhile, groups similar to the Loyal Nine but calling themselves Sons of Liberty began forming throughout the colonies. After the assault on Hutchinson's mansion and an even more violent incident in Newport, Rhode Island, the leaders of the Sons of Liberty sought to prevent more such rampages, lest they alienate elite opponents of the tax. Thereafter they directed their violence against property and invariably left avenues of escape for their victims. Especially fearful that a royal soldier or revenue officer might be shot or killed, the Sons of Liberty forbade their followers to carry weapons, even when facing armed adversaries. Realizing the value of martyrs, they resolved that the only lives lost over the issue of British taxation would come from their own ranks.

In October 1765 representatives of nine colonial assemblies met in New York City in the so-called Stamp Act Congress. The session was remarkable for the colonies' agreement on and bold articulation of the general principle that Parliament lacked authority to levy taxes outside Great Britain and to deny any person a jury trial. Only once before had a truly intercolonial meeting taken place—the Albany Congress, in 1754—and its plea for unity had fallen on deaf ears. In 1765 the



### Stamp Act Protest

*A Boston crowd burns bundles of the special watermarked paper intended for use as stamps.*

colonial response was entirely different. "The Ministry never imagined we could or would so generally unite in opposition to their measures," wrote a Connecticut delegate to the congress, "nor I confess till I saw the Experiment made did I."

By late 1765 most stamp distributors had resigned or fled, and without the watermarked paper required by law, most royal customs officials and court officers were refusing to perform their duties. In response, legislators compelled the reluctant officials to resume operation by threatening to withhold their pay. At the same time, merchants obtained sailing clearances by insisting that they would sue if cargoes spoiled while delayed in port. By late December the courts and harbors of almost every colony were again functioning.

Thus the colonial upper class assumed control of the public outcry against the Stamp Act. Respectable gentlemen moved to keep an explosive situation from getting out of hand by taking over leadership of local

Sons of Liberty groups, by coordinating protest through the Stamp Act Congress, and by having colonial legislatures restore normal business. Colonial leaders feared that chaos was about to break out, particularly if British troops landed to enforce the Stamp Act. An influential Pennsylvanian, John Dickinson, summed up how colonial elites envisioned the dire consequences of revolutionary turmoil: “a multitude of Commonwealths, Crimes, and Calamities, Centuries of mutual jealousies, Hatreds, Wars of Devastation, till at last the exhausted provinces shall sink into savagery under the yoke of some fortunate Conqueror.”

Such extreme consequences did not come to pass, though the Stamp Act remained in effect. To force its repeal, New York’s merchants agreed on October 31, 1765, to boycott all British goods, and businessmen in other cities soon followed their example. Because American colonists purchased about 40 percent of England’s manufactures, this nonimportation strategy put the English economy in danger of recession. The colonial boycotts consequently triggered panic within England’s business community, whose members descended on Parliament to warn that the Stamp Act’s continuation would stimulate a wave of bankruptcies, massive unemployment, and political unrest.

For reasons unconnected with the Stamp Act, George Grenville had fallen from George III’s favor in mid-1765 and had been succeeded by the Marquis of Rockingham. The new prime minister hesitated to advocate repeal because the overwhelming majority within the House of Commons was outraged at colonial defiance of the law. Then in January 1766 William Pitt, a steadfast opponent of the Stamp Act, boldly denounced all efforts to tax the colonies, declaring, “I rejoice that America has resisted.” Parliamentary support for repeal thereafter grew, though only as a matter of practicality, not as a surrender of principle. In March 1766 Parliament revoked the Stamp Act, but only in conjunction with passage of the Declaratory Act, which affirmed parliamentary power to legislate for the colonies “in all cases whatsoever.”

Because the Declaratory Act was written in general language, Americans interpreted its meaning to their advantage. Most colonial political leaders recognized that the law was modeled after an earlier statute of 1719 regarding Ireland, which was considered exempt from British taxation. The measure therefore seemed no more than a parliamentary exercise in saving face to compensate for the Stamp Act’s repeal, and Americans

ignored it. The House of Commons, however, intended that the colonists take the Declaratory Act literally to mean that they could not claim exemption from *any* parliamentary statute, including a tax law. The Stamp Act crisis thus ended in a fundamental disagreement between Britain and America over the colonists’ political rights.

Although the Stamp Act crisis had not resolved the underlying philosophical differences between Britain and America, most colonists eagerly put the events of 1765 behind them, and they showered both king and Parliament with loyal statements of gratitude for the Stamp Act’s repeal. The Sons of Liberty disbanded. Anglo-Americans manifestly still possessed a deep emotional loyalty to “Old England” and concluded with relief that their active resistance to the law had slapped Britain’s leaders back to their senses. Nevertheless, the crisis led many to ponder British policies and actions more deeply than ever before.

### *Ideology, Religion, and Resistance*

The Stamp Act and the conflicts that arose around it revealed a chasm between England and its colonies that startled Anglo-Americans. For the first time, some sensed a sinister quality to the imperial relationship that they previously had taken for granted and valued. In their efforts to grasp the significance of their new perceptions, a number of educated colonists turned to the works of philosophers, historians, and political writers. Many more, both educated and uneducated, looked to religion.

By the 1760s the colonists already were widely familiar with the political writings of European Enlightenment thinkers, particularly John Locke (see Chapter 4). Locke argued that humanity originated in a state of nature in which people enjoyed the “natural rights” of life, liberty, and property. Thereafter, people entered into a “social contract” in order to form governments that would protect those rights. A government that encroached on natural rights, then, broke its contract with the people. In such cases, people could resist their government, although Locke cautioned against outright rebellion except in the most extreme cases. To many colonial readers, Locke’s concept of natural rights appeared to justify opposition to arbitrary legislation by Parliament.

Among the most widely read authors in the colonies were a group of English political writers



known as oppositionists. According to John Trenchard, Thomas Gordon, and others belonging to this group, Parliament—consisting of the freely elected representatives of the people—formed the foundation of England’s unique political liberties and protected those liberties against the inherent corruption and tyranny of executive power. But since 1720, the oppositionists argued, prime ministers had exploited the treasury’s vast resources to provide pensions, contracts, and profitable offices to politicians or had bought elections by bribing voters in small boroughs. Most members of Parliament, in their view, no longer represented the true interests of their constituents; rather, they had sold their souls for financial gain and joined in a “conspiracy against liberty.” Often referring to themselves as the “country party,” these oppositionists feared that a power-hungry “court party” of nonelected officials close to the king was using a corrupted Parliament to gain absolute power for themselves.

During the 1760s and 1770s, a group of English radicals, most notably Joseph Priestley and James Burgh, drew on both Enlightenment and oppositionist authors to fashion a wide-ranging critique of English government and a new way of thinking about politics. At the heart of all political relationships, they argued, a struggle raged between the aggressive extension of artificial *power*, as represented by corrupt governments, and the natural *liberty* of the people. To protect their liberty, a free people had to avoid moral corruption in their own lives and resist the encroachments of power, or tyranny. Above all, they had to remain alert for “designs” or “conspiracies” against liberty wherever they might appear.

Influenced by such ideas, a number of colonists detected a diabolical conspiracy behind British policy during the Stamp Act crisis. James Otis characterized a group of pro-British Rhode Islanders as a “little, dirty, drinking, drabbing, contaminated knot of thieves, beggars, and transports . . . made up of Turks, Jews, and other infidels, with a few renegade Christians and Catholics.” Joseph Warren of Massachusetts noted that the act “induced some to imagine that the minister designed by this to force the colonies into a rebellion, and from thence to take occasion to treat them with severity, and, by military power, to reduce them to servitude.” Over the next decade, a proliferation of pamphlets denounced British efforts to “enslave” the colonies through excessive taxation and the imposition of officials, judges, and a standing army directed from



**A Patriot View of British Officials,  
1766**

*This Boston editorial cartoon depicts two British officials as enslaved to the devil.*

London. In such assaults on liberty and natural rights, some Americans found principled reasons for opposing British policies and actions.

Many colonists also followed the lead of Massachusetts assemblyman Samuel Adams, who expressed hope that America would become a “Christian Sparta.” By linking Christian piety and classical antiquity, Adams was combining two of colonial leaders’ most potent rhetorical appeals in rallying public protest. Almost every eighteenth-century American had been steeped in Protestantism since childhood; and all whose education had gone beyond the basics had imbibed Greek and Latin learning, as well as seventeenth-century English literature. All these hallowed traditions, Americans believed, confirmed the legitimacy of their cause.

Recalling in later years the inspiring debate over the Stamp Act that he had witnessed in Virginia’s House of Burgesses in 1765, Thomas Jefferson said of Patrick Henry that “he appeared to me to speak as Homer wrote.” Jefferson was a typical educated man of his day in revering the ancient republics of Greece and Rome

for their supposedly stern, virtuous devotion to liberty. The pamphlets, speeches, and public declarations that gentlemen like Jefferson and John Dickinson wrote resounded with quotations from the ancient classics. These allusions served as constant reminders to upper-class Americans of the righteous dignity of their cause. But appeals to ordinary Americans had to draw upon deeper wellsprings of belief. Significantly, the power of Henry's oratory also reflected his ability (unique among Virginia political leaders) to evoke the religious fervor of the Great Awakening.

Beginning with the Stamp Act protest, New England's clergymen mounted their pulpits and summoned their flocks to stand up for God and liberty. "A just regard to our liberties . . . is so far from being displeasing to God that it would be ingratitude to him who has given them to us to . . . tamely give them up," exhorted one minister. With equally heartfelt intensity, Baptist and other dissenting preachers took up the cause. Only Anglican ministers, whose church was headed by the king, tried to stay neutral or opposed the protest; and many pacifist Quakers kept out of the fray. But to most American Protestant clergymen, memories of battling for the Lord in the old Calvinist tradition proved too powerful to resist.

Voicing such a message, clergymen exerted an enormous influence on public opinion. Far more Americans heard sermons than had access to newspapers or pamphlets, and ministers always got a respectful hearing at town meetings. Community leaders' proclamations of days of "fasting and public humiliation"—in colonial America, a familiar means of focusing public attention on an issue and invoking divine aid—inspired sermons on the theme of God's sending the people woes only to strengthen and sustain them until victory. Even Virginia gentlemen not notable for their piety felt moved by such proclamations. Moreover, protest leaders' calls for boycotting British luxuries meshed neatly with traditional pulpit warnings against frivolity and wastefulness. Few ordinary Americans escaped the unceasing public reminders that community solidarity against British tyranny and "corruption" meant rejecting sin and obeying God.

The ebbing of the Stamp Act crisis momentarily took the urgency out of such extreme views. But the alarm that Britain's actions raised in the minds of many colonists was not easily put to rest. After a hiatus of two years, it was clear that British and American views of the colonies' place in the empire remained as far apart as ever.

## The Deepening Crisis

From 1767 to 1773, Parliament pursued a confrontational policy that gradually corroded Americans' trust of Britain. The British government's actions in these years created a climate of fear and alienation that left most colonists convinced that the Stamp Act had not been an isolated mistake but part of a deliberate design to undermine colonial self-governance. In this they were joined by many in Britain who questioned policies that were economically costly and actions that seemed to threaten Britons and colonists alike.

### *The Quartering Act*

In August 1766, in a move arising out of British politics, George III dismissed the Rockingham government and summoned William Pitt to form a cabinet. Opposed to taxing the colonies, Pitt might have repaired the Stamp Act's damage, for no man was more respected in America. But Pitt's health collapsed in March 1767, and effective leadership passed to his chancellor of the exchequer (treasurer) Charles Townshend.

Just as Townshend took office, a conflict arose with the New York legislature over the Quartering Act of 1765. This law ordered colonial legislatures to pay for certain goods needed by soldiers stationed within their respective borders. The necessary items were relatively inexpensive barracks supplies such as candles, windowpanes, mattress straw, polish, and a small liquor ration.

Despite its seemingly petty stipulations, the law aroused resentment, for it constituted an *indirect* tax; that is, although it did not (like the Stamp Act) empower royal officials to collect money directly from the colonists, it obligated assemblies to raise a stated amount of revenue by whatever means they considered appropriate. The act fell lightly or not at all on most colonies; but New York, where more soldiers were stationed than in any other province, found compliance very burdensome and refused to grant any supplies.

New York's resistance to indirect taxation produced a torrent of anti-American feeling in the House of Commons, whose members remained bitter at having had to withdraw the Stamp Act. Townshend responded by drafting the New York Suspending Act, which threatened to nullify all laws passed by the colony if the assembly refused to vote the supplies. By the time that George III signed the measure, however, New York had appropriated the necessary funds.



Although New York's retreat averted further confrontation, the conflict over the Quartering Act demonstrated that British leaders would not hesitate to defend Parliament's sovereignty through the most drastic of all steps: by interfering with American claims to self-governance.

### ***The Townshend Duties***

The new wave of parliamentary resentment toward the colonies coincided with an outpouring of British frustration over the government's failure to cut taxes from wartime levels. Dominating the House of Commons, members of the landed gentry slashed their own taxes by 25 percent in 1767. This move cost the government £500,000 and prompted Townshend to propose laws that would tax imports entering America and increase colonial customs revenue.

Townshend sought to tax the colonists by exploiting an oversight in their arguments against the Stamp Act. In confronting the Stamp Act, Americans had emphasized their opposition to *internal* taxes, but had said little about Parliament's right to tax imports as they entered the colonies. Townshend and other British leaders chose to interpret this silence as evidence that the colonists accepted Britain's right to tax their trade—to impose *external* taxes. Yet not all British politicians were so mistaken. "They will laugh at you," predicted a now wiser George Grenville, "for your distinctions about regulations of trade." Brushing aside Grenville's warnings, Parliament passed Townshend's Revenue Act of 1767 (popularly called the Townshend duties) in June and July 1767. The new law taxed glass, paint, lead, paper, and tea imported into the colonies.

On the surface, Townshend's contention that the Americans would submit to this external tax on imports was convincing, for the colonists had long accepted Parliament's right to regulate their overseas trade and had in principle acknowledged taxation as a legitimate form of regulation. But Townshend's Revenue Act differed significantly from what Americans had long seen as a legitimate way of regulating trade through taxation. To the colonists, charging a duty was a lawful way for British authorities to control trade only if that duty excluded foreign goods by making them prohibitively expensive to consumers. The Revenue Act of 1767, however, set moderate rates that did not price goods out of the colonial market; clearly, its purpose was to collect money for the treasury. Thus from the

colonial standpoint, Townshend's duties were taxes just like the Stamp Act duties.

Although Townshend had introduced the Revenue Act in response to the government's budgetary problems, he had an ulterior motive for establishing an American source of revenue. Traditionally, royal governors had depended on colonial legislatures to vote their salaries; for their part, the legislatures had often refused to allocate these salaries until governors signed certain bills they themselves opposed. Through the Revenue Act, Townshend hoped to establish a fund that would pay the salaries of governors and other royal officials in America, thus freeing them from the assemblies' control. In effect, by stripping the assemblies of their most potent weapon, the power of the purse, the Revenue Act threatened to tip the balance of constitutional power away from elected colonial representatives and toward unelected royal officials.

In reality the Revenue Act would never yield anything like the income that Townshend anticipated. Of the various items taxed, only tea produced any significant revenue—£20,000 of the £37,000 that the law was expected to yield. And because the measure would serve its purpose only if British tea were affordable to colonial consumers, Townshend eliminated £60,000 worth of import fees paid on Dutch East Indian tea entering Britain before transshipment to America. On balance, the Revenue Act *worsened* the British treasury's deficit by £23,000. By 1767 Britain's financial difficulties were more an excuse for, than the driving force behind, political demands to tax the colonies. From Parliament's standpoint, the conflict with America was becoming a test of national will over the *principle* of taxation.

### ***The Colonists' Reaction***

Parliament gave the colonists little time to plan resistance against the Townshend duties. Americans only learned of the Revenue Act shortly before it went into operation, and they hesitated over the appropriate response. The strong-arm tactics that sent stamp tax collectors into panicky flight would not work against the Townshend duties, which the navy could easily collect offshore, safe from any Sons of Liberty.

Resistance to the Revenue Act remained weak until December 1767, when John Dickinson published twelve essays entitled *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*. The essays, which appeared in nearly every colonial newspaper, emphasized that although

Parliament could regulate trade by voting duties capable of providing small amounts of “incidental revenue,” it had no right to tax commerce for the single purpose of raising revenue. In other words, the legality of any external tax depended on its intent. No tax designed to produce revenue could be considered constitutional unless a people’s elected representatives voted for it. Dickinson said nothing that others had not stated or implied during the Stamp Act crisis. Rather, his contribution lay in persuading many Americans that the arguments that they had marshaled against the Stamp Act also applied to the Revenue Act.

Soon after publication of Dickinson’s *Letters*, James Otis, the Boston lawyer famed for his arguments in the writs-of-assistance case, chaired a Boston town meeting that asked the Massachusetts legislature to oppose the Townshend duties. In response, the assembly in early 1768 called on Samuel Adams to draft a “circular letter” to every other legislature. Adams’s letter forthrightly condemned both taxation without representation and the threat to self-governance posed by Parliament’s making governors and other royal officials financially independent of the legislatures. But it ac-

knowledgeed Parliament as the “supreme legislative Power over the whole Empire,” and it advocated no illegal activities. Virginia’s assembly warmly approved Adams’s message and sent out a more strongly worded circular letter of its own, urging all colonies to oppose imperial policies that would “have an immediate tendency to enslave them.” But most colonial legislatures reacted indifferently to these letters. In fact, resistance to the Revenue Act might have disintegrated had the British government not overreacted to the circular letters.

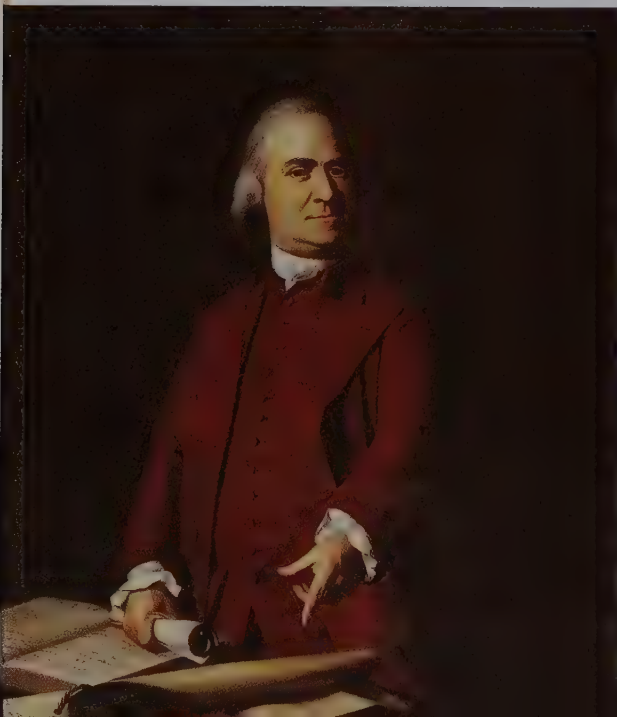
Parliamentary leaders regarded even the mild Massachusetts letter as “little better than an incentive to Rebellion.” Disorganized by Townshend’s sudden death in 1767, the king’s Privy Council directed Lord Hillsborough, first appointee to the new post of secretary of state for the colonies, to express the government’s displeasure. Hillsborough flatly told the Massachusetts assembly to disown its letter, forbade all assemblies to endorse it, and commanded royal governors to dissolve any colonial legislature that violated his instructions. George III later commented that he never met “a man of less judgment than Lord Hillsborough.” A wiser man might have tried to divide the colonists by appealing to their sense of British patriotism, but Hillsborough had chosen a course guaranteed to unite them in anger.

To protest Hillsborough’s crude bullying, many legislatures previously indifferent to the Massachusetts circular letter now adopted it enthusiastically. The Massachusetts House of Representatives voted 92–17 not to recall its letter. The number 92 immediately acquired symbolic significance for Americans; colonial politicians on more than one occasion drank 92 toasts in tipsy salutes to Massachusetts’s action. In obedience to Hillsborough, royal governors responded by dismissing legislatures in Massachusetts and elsewhere. These moves played directly into the hands of Samuel Adams, James Otis, and John Dickinson, who wanted nothing more than to ignite widespread opposition to the Townshend duties.

Although increasingly outraged over the Revenue Act, the colonists still needed some effective means of pressuring Parliament for its repeal. One approach, nonimportation, seemed especially promising because it offered an alternative to violence and would distress Britain’s economy. In August 1768 Boston’s merchants therefore adopted a nonimportation agreement, and the tactic slowly spread southward. “Save your money,

### Samuel Adams

*A central player in the drive for American liberty, Adams wrote in 1774, “I wish for a permanent union with the mother country, but only in terms of liberty and truth. No advantage that can accrue to America from such a union, can compensate for the loss of liberty.”*





and you save your country!" became the watchword of the Sons of Liberty, who began reorganizing after two years of inactivity. Not all colonists supported nonimportation, however. Its effectiveness ultimately depended on the compliance of merchants, whose livelihood relied, in turn, on buying and selling imports. In several major communities, including Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Charles Town (Charleston), South Carolina, merchants continued buying British goods until 1769. Far from complete, the boycott probably kept out about 40 percent of all imports from Britain.

### ***"Wilkes and Liberty"***

The exclusion of 40 percent of imports seriously affected many people in Britain and thus heightened pressure there, too, for repeal of the Townshend duties. Hardest hit were merchants and artisans dealing in consumer goods. Their protests formed part of a larger movement that arose during the 1760s to oppose the domestic and foreign policies of George III and a Parliament dominated by wealthy landowners. The leader of this movement was John Wilkes, a fiery London editor and member of Parliament who had first gained notoriety in 1763, when his newspaper regularly and irreverently denounced George III's policies. The government had finally arrested Wilkes for seditious libel, but to great popular acclaim, he had won his case in court. The government, however, had succeeded in shutting down his newspaper and in persuading members of the House of Commons to deny Wilkes his seat. After again offending the government with a publication, Wilkes had fled to Paris.

Wilkes returned to England in 1768, defying a warrant for his arrest, and ran again for Parliament. By this time the Townshend acts and other government policies were stirring up widespread protests. Merchants and artisans in London, Bristol, and other cities demanded the dismissal of the "obnoxious" ministers who were "ruining our manufactories by invidiously imposing and establishing the most impolitic and unconstitutional taxations and regulations on your Majesty's colonies." They were joined by (nonvoting) weavers, coal heavers, seamen, and other workers who protested low wages and high prices that stemmed in part from government policies. All these people rallied around the cry, "Wilkes and liberty!"

After he again was elected to Parliament, Wilkes was arrested. The next day, twenty to forty thousand an-



**The Alternative of Williamsburg**, by Philip Dawe, 1775  
*In this cartoon, armed patriots in Williamsburg, Virginia, obtain a merchant's written agreement not to import British goods. The "alternative" is the containers of tar and feathers hanging in the background.*

gry "Wilkesites" massed on St. George's Fields, outside the prison where he was being held. When members of the crowd began throwing stones, soldiers and police responded with gunfire, killing eleven protesters. The "massacre of St. George's Fields" had given the movement some martyrs. Wilkes and an associate were elected to the seat twice more and were both times denied their seats by other legislators. Meanwhile, the imprisoned Wilkes was besieged by outpourings of popular support, from the colonies as well as from Britain. Some Virginians sent him tobacco, and the South Carolina assembly voted to contribute £1,500 to help defray his debts. He maintained a regular correspondence with the Boston Sons of Liberty and, upon his release in April 1770, was hailed in a massive Boston celebration as "the illustrious martyr to Liberty."

Wilkes's cause sharpened the political thinking of government opponents in Britain and the colonies

alike. Thousands of voters in English cities and towns signed petitions to Parliament protesting its refusal to seat Wilkes as an affront to the electorate's will. Like the colonists, they regarded the theory of "virtual representation" in Parliament as a sham. Fearing arbitrary government actions, some of them formed a Society of the Supporters of the Bill of Rights "to defend and maintain the legal, constitutional liberty of the subject." And while more "respectable" opponents of the government such as William Pitt and Edmund Burke disdained Wilkes for courting the "mob," his movement emboldened them to speak more forcefully against the government, especially on its policies toward the colonies. For the colonists themselves, Wilkes and his following made clear that Parliament

and the government represented a small if powerful minority whose authority could be legitimately questioned.

### *Women and Colonial Resistance*

The tactical value of nonimportation was not restricted to damaging Britain's economy. It also hinged on colonists convincing the British—and one another—that they were determined to sustain resistance, and on demonstrating that their cause rested on the foundations of morality and moderation. In this respect, the nonimportation movement provided a unique opportunity for white women to join the protest against unconstitutional laws.

White women's participation in public affairs had been widening slowly and unevenly among the colonies for several decades. Women far outnumbered men among white church members, especially in New England where ministers frequently hailed them as superior to most men in piety and morality. By the 1760s, when colonial protests against British policies began, colonial women such as Sarah Osborn (see Chapter 4) had become well known as religious activists. Calling themselves the Daughters of Liberty, a contingent of upper-class female patriots had played a minor part in defeating the Stamp Act. Some had attended political rallies during the Stamp Act crisis, and many more had expressed their opposition in discussions and correspondence with family and friends.

In contrast, women assumed a highly visible role during the Townshend crisis. To protest the Revenue Act's tax on tea, more than three hundred "mistresses of families" in Boston denounced the consumption of the beverage in early 1770. In some ways, such nonconsumption was a more effective tactic than nonimportation, for although a minority of merchants might ignore nonimportation on the basis of principle or financial interest, a refusal by colonists to consume imports would chill merchants' incentive to continue importing English products.

Nonconsumption agreements soon became popular and were extended to include English manufactures (mostly clothing) as well as tea. Again women played a vital role, because the boycott would fail unless the colonists replaced British imports with apparel of their own making. Responding to leaders' pleas that they expand domestic cloth production, women of all social ranks, even those who customarily did not weave their own fabric or sew their own clothing, organized spin-

**Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Mifflin**, by John Singleton Copley, 1773. *The Mifflins were prominent Philadelphians. Thomas, a merchant in his early years, sat in the Pennsylvania assembly and the First Continental Congress and was later an officer in the Continental Army. An ardent supporter of the American cause, Sarah Morris Mifflin here demonstrates her patriotism by spinning her own thread.*





ning bees. These events attracted intense publicity as evidence of American determination to fight parliamentary taxation. One historian calculates that more than 1,600 women participated in spinning bees in New England alone from 1768 to 1770. The colonial cause, noted a New York woman, had enlisted "a fighting army of amazons . . . armed with spinning wheels."

Spinning bees not only helped undermine the notion that women had no place in public life but also endowed spinning and weaving, previously considered routine household tasks, with special political virtue. "Women might recover to this country the full and free enjoyment of all our rights, properties and privileges," exclaimed the Reverend John Cleaveland of Ipswich, Massachusetts, in 1769, adding that this "is more than the men have been able to do." For many colonists, such logic enlarged the arena of supposed feminine virtues from strictly religious matters to include political issues.

Spinning bees, combined with female support for boycotting tea, dramatically demonstrated that American determination ran far deeper than the protests of a few male merchants and the largely male crowds in American seaports. Women's participation showed that colonial protests extended into the heart of many American households and congregations, and were leading to broadened popular participation in politics.

### ***Customs Racketeering***

Besides taxing colonial imports, Townshend sought to increase revenues through stricter enforcement of the Navigation Acts. While submitting the Revenue Act of 1767, he also introduced legislation creating the American Board of Customs Commissioners. This law raised the number of port officials, funded the construction of a colonial coast guard, and provided money for secret informers. It also awarded an informer one-third of the value of all goods and ships appropriated through a conviction of smuggling. The fact that fines could be tripled under certain circumstances provided an even greater incentive to seize illegal cargoes. Smuggling cases were heard in vice-admiralty courts, moreover, where the probability of conviction was extremely high.

In the face of lax enforcement, including widespread bribery of customs officials by colonial shippers and merchants, Townshend wanted the board to bring honesty, efficiency, and more revenue to overseas cus-

toms operations. But the law quickly drew protests because of the ways it was enforced and because it assumed those accused to be guilty until or unless they could prove otherwise.

Under the new provisions, revenue agents commonly filed charges for technical violations of the Sugar Act, even when no evidence existed of intent to conduct illegal trade. They most often exploited the provision that declared any cargo illegal unless it had been loaded or unloaded with a customs officer's written authorization. Customs commissioners also fanned angry passions by invading the traditional rights of sailors. Long-standing maritime custom allowed a ship's crew to supplement their incomes by making small sales between ports. Anything stored in a sailor's chest was considered private property that did not have to be listed as cargo on the captain's manifest. After 1767, however, revenue agents began treating such belongings as cargo, thus establishing an excuse to seize the entire ship. Under this new policy, crewmen saw their trunks ruthlessly broken open by arrogant inspectors and then lost trading stock worth several months' wages because it was not listed on the captain's loading papers.

To merchants and seamen alike, the commissioners had embarked on a program of "customs racketeering" that constituted little more than a system of legalized piracy. The board's program fed an upsurge in popular violence. Above all, customs commissioners' use of informers provoked retaliation. The *Pennsylvania Journal* in 1769 scorned these agents as "dogs of prey, thirsting after the fortunes of worthy and wealthy men." By betraying the trust of employers, and sometimes of friends, informers aroused wild hatred in their victims and were roughly handled whenever found.

Nowhere were customs agents and informers more detested than in Boston, where in June 1768 citizens finally retaliated against their tormentors. The occasion was the seizure, on a technicality, of the colonial merchant John Hancock's sloop *Liberty*. Hancock, reportedly North America's richest merchant and a leading opponent of British taxation, had become a chief target of the customs commissioners. Now they fined him £9,000, an amount almost thirteen times greater than the taxes he supposedly evaded on a shipment of Madeira wine. A crowd tried to prevent the towing of Hancock's ship and then began assaulting customs agents. Growing to several hundred as it surged through the streets, the mob drove all revenue inspectors from Boston.

Hancock's case forced colonists to reevaluate their former acceptance of the principle that Parliament had limited authority to pass laws for them. Prior to 1768 colonial leaders had single-mindedly denied Britain's power to tax them, without considering that freedoms of equal importance might also be jeopardized by other kinds of legislation. But by 1770 many argued that measures like the Sugar Act and the act creating the American Board of Customs Commissioners seriously endangered property rights and civil liberties. They expanded their opposition from a rejection of taxation without representation to a more broadly based rejection of legislation without representation. By 1774 there would emerge a new consensus that Parliament possessed no lawmaking authority over the colonies except the right to regulate imperial commerce through statutes like the old Navigation Acts.

### *The Boston Massacre*

Responding to the violence stirred up by the customs commissioners, the British government dispatched seventeen hundred British troops to Boston during the six weeks after October 1, 1768. Regarding the troops as a "standing army" that threatened their liberty, as well as a financial burden, Bostonians resented the soldiers' presence.

Boston rapidly took on the atmosphere of an occupied city and crackled with tension as armed sentries and resentful civilians traded insults. The mainly Protestant townspeople found it especially galling that many soldiers were Irish Catholics. The poorly paid enlisted men, moreover, were free to seek employment following the morning muster. Often agreeing to work for less than local laborers, they generated fierce hostility in a community that was plagued by persistently high unemployment.

Although Bostonians endured their first winter as a garrison town without undue trouble, relations between the remaining soldiers and the city's poorer civilians only worsened. The deep-seated resentment against all who upheld British authority suddenly boiled over on February 22, 1770, when a customs informer shot into a crowd picketing the home of a customs-paying merchant, killing an eleven-year-old boy. While elite Bostonians had disdained the unruly exchanges between soldiers and crowds, the horror at a child's death momentarily united the community. "My Eyes never beheld such a funeral," wrote John Adams. "A vast Number of Boys walked before the Coffin, a vast Number of Women and Men after it. . . . This Shews

there are many more Lives to spend if wanted in the Service of their country."

Although the army had played no part in the shooting, it became a natural target for popular frustration and rage. A week after the boy's funeral, tensions between troops and a crowd led by Crispus Attucks, a seaman of African and Native American descent, and including George Robert Twelves Hewes, erupted at the guard post protecting the customs office. When an officer tried to disperse the civilians, his men endured a steady barrage of flying objects and dares to shoot. A private finally did fire, after having been knocked down by a block of ice, and then shouted, "Fire! Fire!" to his fellow soldiers. The soldiers' volley hit eleven persons, five of whom, including Attucks, died.

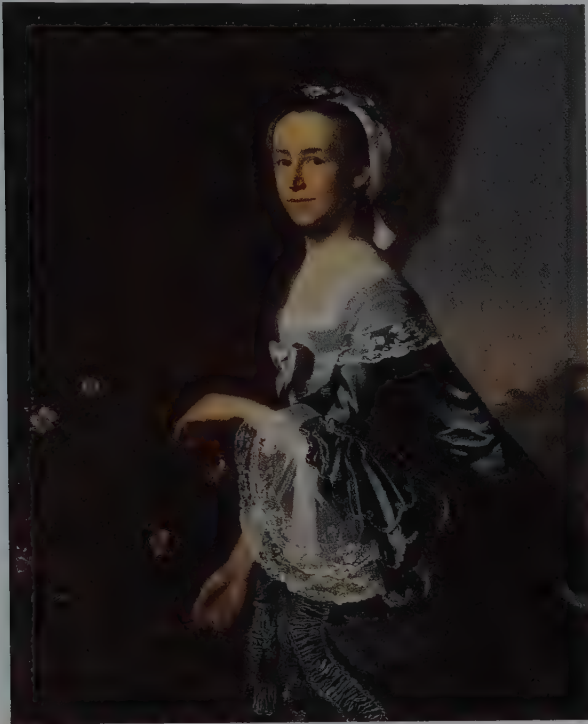
The shock that followed the March 5 bloodshed marked the emotional high point of the Townshend crisis. Royal authorities in Massachusetts tried to defuse the situation in Boston by isolating all British soldiers on a fortified island in the harbor, and Governor Thomas Hutchinson promised that the soldiers who had fired would be tried. Patriot leader John Adams, an opponent of crowd actions, served as their attorney. Adams appealed to the Boston jury by claiming that the soldiers had been provoked by a "motley rabble of saucy boys, negroes and mulattoes, Irish teagues, and outlandish jack tarres," in other words, people not considered "respectable" by the city's elites and middle class. All but two of the soldiers were acquitted, and the ones found guilty suffered only a branding on their thumbs.

Burning hatreds produced by an intolerable situation underlay the Boston Massacre, as it came to be called in conscious recollection of the St. George's Fields Massacre of Wilkesites in London two years earlier. The shooting of unarmed American civilians by British soldiers, and the light punishment given the soldiers, forced the colonists to confront the stark possibility that the British government was bent on coercing and suppressing them through naked force. In a play written by Mercy Otis Warren, a character predicted that soon, "Murders, blood and carnage/Shall crimson all these streets," as patriots rose to defend their republican liberty against tyrannical authority.

### *Lord North's Partial Retreat*

As the Boston Massacre raged, a new British prime minister, Lord North, quietly worked to stabilize relations between Britain and its colonies. North was a





**Mercy Otis Warren** by John Singleton Copley, 1763  
*Essayist and playwright Mercy Otis Warren was the most prominent woman intellectual of the Revolutionary era.*

shrewd politician who would remain in office until 1782. North favored eliminating most of the Townshend duties to prevent the American commercial boycott from widening, but to underscore British authority, he insisted on retaining the tax on tea. Parliament agreed, and in April 1770, giving in for the second time in three years to colonial pressure, it repealed most of the Townshend duties.

Parliament's partial repeal produced a dilemma for American politicians. They considered it intolerable that taxes remained on tea, the most profitable item for the royal treasury. Colonial leaders were unsure whether they should press on with the nonimportation agreement until they achieved total victory, or whether it would suffice to maintain a selective boycott of tea. When the nonimportation movement collapsed in July 1770, colonists resisted external taxation by voluntary agreements not to drink British tea. Through nonconsumption they succeeded in limiting revenue from tea to about one-sixth the level originally expected. This amount was far too little to pay the salaries of royal governors as Townshend had intended.

Yet colonial resistance leaders took little satisfaction in having forced Parliament to compromise. The tea duty remained as a galling reminder that Parliament refused to retreat from the broadest possible interpretation of the Declaratory Act.

Meanwhile, the British government, aware of officers' excesses, took steps to rein in the powers of the American Board of Customs Commissioners. The smuggling charges against Hancock were finally dropped because the prosecution feared that Hancock would appeal a conviction to England, where honest officials would take action against the persons responsible for violating his rights.

### *The Committees of Correspondence*

In the fall of 1772, Lord North's ministry was preparing to implement Townshend's goal of paying the royal governors' salaries out of customs revenue. The colonists had always viewed this intention to free the governors from legislative domination as a fundamental threat to representative government. In response, Samuel Adams persuaded Boston's town meeting to request that every Massachusetts community appoint persons responsible for exchanging information and coordinating measures to defend colonial rights. Of approximately 260 towns, about half immediately established "committees of correspondence," and most others did so within a year. From Massachusetts the idea spread throughout New England.

The committees of correspondence were the colonists' first attempt to maintain close and continuing political cooperation over a wide area. By linking almost every interior community to Boston through a network of dedicated activists, the system allowed Adams to conduct a campaign of political education for all of New England. Adams sent out messages for each town's local committee to read at its own town meeting, which would then debate the issues and adopt a formal resolution. Forcing tens of thousands of citizens to consider evidence that their rights were in danger, the system committed them to take a personal stand by voting.

Adams's most successful venture in whipping up public alarm came in June 1773, when he publicized certain letters of Massachusetts governor Thomas Hutchinson that Benjamin Franklin had obtained. Massachusetts town meetings discovered through the letters that their own chief executive had advocated "an abridgement of what are called English liberties" and "a great restraint of natural liberty." The publication of

the Hutchinson correspondence confirmed American suspicions of a plot to destroy basic freedoms.

In March 1773, Patrick Henry, Thomas Jefferson, and Richard Henry Lee proposed that Virginia establish colony-level committees of correspondence. Within a year every province but Pennsylvania had followed its example. By early 1774 colonial leaders were linked by a communications web for the first time since 1766.

In contrast to the brief, intense Stamp Act crisis, the dissatisfaction spawned by the Townshend duties and the American Board of Customs Commissioners persisted and gradually poisoned relations between Britain and America. In 1765 feelings of loyalty and affection toward Britain had remained strong in America and thus had helped disguise the depth of the division over the constitutional issue of taxation. By 1773, however, colonial allegiance was becoming conditional and could no longer be assumed.

### *Frontier Tensions*

Although most of the conflicts between colonists and British officials took place in the eastern seaports, tensions along the frontier contributed to a continuing sense of crisis among natives, settlers, and colonial authorities. These stresses were rooted in the rapid growth that had spurred the migration of people and capital to the Appalachian frontier, where colonists and their governments sought access to Indian land.

Land pressures and the lack of adequate revenue from the colonies left the British government utterly helpless in enforcing the Proclamation of 1763. Speculators such as George Washington sought western land because “any person who . . . neglects the present opportunity of hunting out good Lands will never regain it.” Settlers, traders, hunters, and thieves also trespassed on Indian land, and a growing number of instances of violence by colonists toward Indians were going unpunished. In the meantime, the British government was unable to maintain garrisons at many of its forts, to enforce violations of laws and treaties, or to provide gifts to its native allies. Under such pressure, Britain and its Iroquois allies agreed in the Treaty of Fort Stanwix (1768) to grant land along the Ohio River that was occupied by the Shawnees, Delawares, and Cherokees to the government of Pennsylvania and Virginia. The Shawnees now assumed leadership of the “republican” Indians who, along with the Cherokees, sensed

that no policy of appeasement could stop colonial expansion.

The treaty served only to heighten rather than ease frontier tensions, especially in the Ohio country where settlers agitated to establish a new colony, Kentucky. Growing violence there culminated in 1774 in the unprovoked slaughter by colonists of thirteen Shawnees and Mingos, including eight members of the family of Logan, until then a moderate Mingo leader. The outraged Logan led a force of Shawnees and Mingos who retaliated by killing an equal number of white Virginians. The colony in turn opened a campaign against the Indians known as Lord Dunmore’s War (1774), for Virginia’s governor. The two forces met at Point Pleasant on the Virginia side of the Ohio River, where the colonists soundly defeated the Indians. During the peace conference that followed, the Virginians gained uncontested rights to lands south of the Ohio in exchange for all claims on the northern side. But resentments remained strong on both sides and fighting would resume once Britain and its colonies went to war.

The Treaty of Fort Stanwix resolved the conflicting claims of Pennsylvania and Virginia in Ohio at the Indians’ expense. But other frontier disputes led to conflict among the colonists themselves. Settlers moving west in Massachusetts in the early 1760s found their titles challenged by some of New York’s powerful landlords. When two landlords threatened to evict tenants in 1766, the New Englanders joined the tenants in an armed uprising, calling themselves Sons of Liberty after the Stamp Act protesters. In 1769, in what is now Vermont, settlers from New Hampshire also came into conflict with New York. After four years of guerrilla warfare, the New Hampshire settlers, calling themselves the Green Mountain Boys, established an independent government. Unrecognized at the time, it eventually became the government of Vermont. A third group of New England settlers, from Connecticut, settled in the Wyoming Valley of Pennsylvania, where they clashed in 1774 with Pennsylvanians claiming title to the same land.

Expansion also provoked conflicts between frontier settlers and their colonial governments. In North Carolina a group known as the Regulators aimed to redress the grievances of settlers living in the colony’s western regions. The westerners, underrepresented in the colonial assembly, had found themselves exploited by dishonest officeholders appointed by eastern politicians. The Regulator movement climaxed on May 16, 1771, at



the battle of Alamance Creek. Leading an army of perhaps thirteen hundred eastern militiamen, North Carolina's royal governor defeated about twenty-five hundred Regulators in a clash that produced almost three hundred casualties. Although the Regulator uprising then disintegrated, it crippled the colony's subsequent ability to resist British authority.

An armed Regulator movement also arose in South Carolina, in this case to counter the government's unwillingness to prosecute bandits who were terrorizing settlers. But the South Carolina government did not dispatch its militia to the frontier for fear that the colony's restive slave population might use the occasion to revolt. Instead it conceded to the principal demands of the Regulators by establishing four new judicial circuits and allowing jury trials in the newly settled areas.

Although not directly related to one another, these frontier episodes all reflect the tensions generated by a rising land-hungry population and its willingness to defy established authorities and resort to violence. As tensions mounted between colonists and British authorities in older settled areas, the frontier dwellers' anxious mood spread.

## Toward Independence

Although the British Empire remained superficially tranquil in early 1773, it had resolved none of its underlying constitutional problems. To a large degree, Americans ignored the continued taxation of tea because of a widespread expectation that Lord North would eventually have the duty repealed. Parliament suddenly blasted this unrealistic hope when it passed the Tea Act in 1773. This measure set off a chain reaction that started with the Boston Tea Party in late 1773 and was followed by Parliament's Coercive Acts in 1774, the First Continental Congress in September 1774, the outbreak of fighting in April 1775, and the colonists' declaration of their independence in July 1776.

### *The Tea Act*

Colonial smuggling and nonconsumption had taken a heavy toll on the East India Company, which enjoyed a legal monopoly on importing tea into the British Empire. By 1773, with tons of tea rotting in its warehouses, the company was teetering on the brink of bankruptcy. But Lord North could not let the company fail. Not only

did it pay substantial duties on the tea it imported into Britain, but it also provided huge indirect savings for the government by maintaining British authority in India at its own expense.

If the company could only control the colonial market, North reasoned, its chances for returning to profitability would greatly increase. Americans supposedly consumed more than a million pounds of tea each year, but by 1773 they were purchasing just one-quarter of it from the company. In May 1773, to save the beleaguered East India Company from financial ruin, Parliament passed the Tea Act, which eliminated all remaining import duties on tea entering England and thus lowered the selling price to consumers. (Ironically, the same saving could have been accomplished by repealing the Townshend tax, which would have ended colonial objections to the company's tea and produced enormous goodwill toward the British government.) To lower the price further, the Tea Act also permitted the company to sell its tea directly to consumers rather than through wholesalers. These two concessions reduced the cost of East India Company tea in the colonies well below the price of all smuggled competition. Parliament expected simple economic self-interest to overcome American scruples about buying taxed tea.

But the Tea Act alarmed many Americans, above all because they saw in it a menace to colonial representative government. By making taxed tea competitive in price with smuggled tea, the law would raise revenue, which the British government would use to pay royal governors. The law thus threatened to corrupt Americans into accepting the principle of parliamentary taxation by taking advantage of their weakness for a frivolous luxury. Quickly, therefore, the committees of correspondence decided to resist the importation of tea, though without violence and without the destruction of private property. Either by pressuring the company's agents to refuse acceptance or by intercepting the ships at sea and ordering them home, the committees would keep East India Company cargoes from being landed. In Philadelphia an anonymous "Committee for Tarring and Feathering" warned harbor pilots not to guide any ships carrying tea into port.

In Boston, however, this strategy failed. On November 28, 1773, the first ship came under the jurisdiction of the customhouse, where duties would have to be paid on its cargo within twenty days. Otherwise, the cargo would be seized from the captain and the tea claimed by the company's agents and placed on sale.

When Samuel Adams, John Hancock, and other leading citizens repeatedly asked the customs officers to issue a special clearance for the ship's departure, they were blocked by Thomas Hutchinson's refusal to compromise.

On the evening of December 16, Samuel Adams convened a meeting in Old South Church. He informed the five thousand citizens of Hutchinson's insistence upon landing the tea, told them that the grace period would expire in a few hours, and announced that "this meeting can do no more to save the country." Disguised as Indians, about fifty young men, including George Robert Twelves Hewes, then yelled a few war whoops and headed for the wharf, followed by most of the crowd.

The disciplined band assaulted no one and damaged nothing but the hated cargo. Thousands lined the waterfront to see them heave forty-five tons of tea overboard. For almost an hour, the onlookers stood silently transfixed, as if at a religious service, while they peered through the crisp, cold air of a moonlit night. The only sounds were the steady chop of hatchets breaking open wooden chests and the soft splash of tea on the water. When their work was finished, the participants left quietly, and the town lapsed into a profound hush—"never more still and calm," according to one observer.

### *The Coercive Acts*

Boston's "Tea Party" inflamed the British. Lord North fumed that only "New England fanatics" could imagine themselves oppressed by inexpensive tea. A Welsh member of Parliament drew wild applause by declaring that "the town of Boston ought to be knocked about by the ears, and destroy'd." In vain did the great parliamentary orator Edmund Burke plead for the one action that could end the crisis. "Leave America . . . to tax herself. . . . Leave the Americans as they anciently stood. . . ." The British government, however, swiftly asserted its authority by enacting four Coercive Acts that, together with the unrelated Quebec Act, became known to many colonists as the "Intolerable Acts."

The first of the Coercive Acts, the Boston Port Bill, became law on April 1, 1774. It ordered the navy to close Boston harbor unless the Privy Council certified by June 1 that the town had arranged to pay for the ruined tea. Lord North's cabinet deliberately imposed this impossibly short deadline in order to ensure the harbor's closing, which would lead to serious economic distress.

The second Coercive Act, the Massachusetts Government Act, revoked the Massachusetts charter and restructured the government to make it less democratic. The colony's upper house would no longer be elected annually by the assembly but appointed for life by the crown. The governor gained absolute control over the naming of all judges and sheriffs. Jurymen, previously elected, were now appointed by sheriffs. Finally, the new charter forbade communities to hold more than one town meeting a year without the governor's permission. These changes brought Massachusetts into line with other royal colonies, but the colonists interpreted them as evidence of hostility toward representative government.

The final two Coercive Acts—the Administration of Justice Act and a new Quartering Act—rubbed salt into the wounds. The first of these permitted any person charged with murder while enforcing royal authority in Massachusetts (such as the British soldiers indicted for the Boston Massacre) to be tried in England or in other colonies. The second went beyond the Quartering Act of 1766 by allowing the governor to requisition *empty* private buildings for housing troops. These measures, along with the appointment of General Thomas Gage, Britain's military commander in North America, as the new governor of Massachusetts, struck New Englanders as proof of a plan to place them under a military tyranny.

Americans learned of the Quebec Act along with the previous four statutes and associated it with them. Intended to cement loyalty to Britain among conquered French-Canadian Catholics, the law established Roman Catholicism as Quebec's official religion. This provision alarmed Protestant Anglo-Americans, who widely believed that Catholicism went hand in hand with despotism. Furthermore, the Quebec Act gave Canada's governors sweeping powers but established no legislature. It also permitted property disputes (but not criminal cases) to be decided by French law, which did not use juries. Additionally, the law extended Quebec's territorial claims south to the Ohio River and west to the Mississippi, a vast area populated by Native Americans and some French. Although designated off-limits by the Proclamation of 1763, portions of the region were claimed by several colonies.

The "Intolerable Acts" convinced New Englanders that the crown was plotting to corrode traditional English liberties throughout North America. Many believed that after starving Boston into submission, the governor of Massachusetts would appoint corrupt sheriffs and



### **"Boston Cannonaded"**

*In this pro-resistance cartoon, Britain's ministers harass and force tea down the throat of America, depicted as an innocent woman. Note that one minister carries a copy of the (Boston) Port Bill (1774) that forced the closing of the city's harbor.*



judges to crush political dissent through rigged trials. The Quartering Act would repress any resistance by forcing troops on an unwilling population. The Administration of Justice Act, which the colonists cynically called the Murder Act, would encourage massacres by preventing local juries from convicting soldiers who killed civilians. Once resistance in Massachusetts had been smashed, the Quebec Act would serve as a blueprint for extinguishing representative government throughout the colonies. Parliament would revoke every colony's charter and introduce a government like Quebec's. Elected assemblies, freedom of religion for Protestants, and jury trials would all disappear.

Intended by Parliament simply to punish Massachusetts—and particularly that rotten apple in the barrel, Boston—the acts instead pushed most colonies to the brink of rebellion. Repeal of these laws became, in effect, the colonists' nonnegotiable demand. Of the twenty-seven reasons justifying the break with Britain that the Americans later cited in the Declaration of Independence, six concerned these statutes.

### ***The First Continental Congress***

In response to the "Intolerable Acts," the extralegal committees of correspondence of every colony but Georgia sent delegates to a Continental Congress in Philadelphia. Among those in attendance when the Congress assembled on September 5, 1774, were many

of the colonies' most prominent politicians: Samuel and John Adams of Massachusetts; John Jay of New York; Joseph Galloway and John Dickinson of Pennsylvania; and Patrick Henry, Richard Henry Lee, and George Washington of Virginia. The fifty-six delegates had come together to find a way of defending the colonies' rights in common, and in interminable dinner parties and cloakroom chatter, they took one another's measure.

The First Continental Congress opened by endorsing a set of statements of principle called the Suffolk Resolves that recently had placed Massachusetts in a state of passive rebellion. Adopted by delegates at a convention of Massachusetts towns just as the Continental Congress was getting under way, the resolves declared that the colonies owed no obedience to any of the Coercive Acts, that a provisional government should collect all taxes until the former Massachusetts charter was restored, and that defensive measures should be taken in the event of an attack by royal troops. The Continental Congress also voted to boycott all British goods after December 1 and to cease exporting almost all goods to Britain and its West Indian possessions after September 1775 unless a reconciliation had been accomplished. This agreement, the Continental Association, would be enforced by locally elected committees of "observation" or "safety," whose members in effect were usurping control of American trade from the royal customs service.

Such bold defiances were not to the liking of all delegates. Jay, Dickinson, Galloway, and other moderates who dominated the middle-colony contingent most feared the internal turmoil that would surely accompany a head-on confrontation with Britain. These “trimmers” (John Adams’s scornful phrase) vainly opposed nonimportation and tried unsuccessfully to win endorsement of Galloway’s plan for a “Grand Council,” an American legislature that would share with Parliament the authority to tax and govern the colonies.

Finally, however, the delegates summarized their principles and demands in a petition to the king. This document conceded to Parliament the power to regulate colonial commerce, but it argued that all previous parliamentary efforts to impose taxes, enforce laws through admiralty courts, suspend assemblies, and unilaterally revoke charters were unconstitutional. By addressing the king rather than Parliament, Congress was imploring George III to end the crisis by dismissing those ministers responsible for passing the Coercive Acts.

### *The Fighting Begins*

Most Americans hoped that their resistance would jolt Parliament into renouncing all authority over the colonies except trade regulation. But tensions between moderates and radicals ran high, so that bonds between men formerly united in outlook sometimes snapped. John Adams’s onetime friend Jonathan Sewall, for example, charged that the Congress had made the “breach with the parent state a thousand times more irreparable than it was before.” Fearing that Congress was enthroning “their *High Mightinesses*, the MOB,” he and like-minded Americans fell back on their loyalty to the king. In England meanwhile, George III sniffed rebellion in the Congress’s actions. His instincts, and those of American loyalists, were correct. A revolution was indeed brewing.

To solidify their defiance, the American resistance leaders coerced waverers and loyalists (or “Tories,” as they were often called). Thus the elected committees that Congress had created to enforce the Continental Association often turned themselves into vigilantes, compelling merchants who still traded with Britain to burn their imports and make public apologies, browbeating clergymen who preached pro-British sermons, and pressuring Americans to adopt simpler diets and dress in order to relieve their dependence on British imports. Additionally, in colony after colony, the commit-

tees took on government functions by organizing volunteer military companies and extralegal legislatures. By the spring of 1775, colonial patriots had established provincial “congresses” that paralleled and rivaled the existing colonial assemblies headed by royal governors.

The uneasy calm was broken in April 1775, in Massachusetts. There as elsewhere, citizens had prepared for the worst by collecting arms and organizing extralegal militia units (locally known as minutemen) whose members could respond instantly to an emergency. The British government ordered Massachusetts governor Gage to quell the “rude rabble” by arresting the principal patriot leaders. Aware that most of these had already fled Boston, Gage instead sent seven hundred British soldiers on April 19, 1775, to seize military supplies that the colonists had stored at Concord. Two couriers, William Dawes and Paul Revere, quickly alerted nearby towns of the British troops’ movements and target. At Lexington about seventy minutemen confronted the soldiers. After a confused skirmish in which eight minutemen died and a single redcoat was wounded, the British pushed on to Concord. There they found few munitions but encountered a growing swarm of armed Yankees (see *A Place in Time*). When some minutemen mistakenly became convinced that the town was being burned, they exchanged fire with the British regulars and touched off a running battle that continued most of the sixteen miles back to Boston. By day’s end the redcoats had lost 273 men, and they had gained some respect for Yankee courage.

These engagements awakened the countryside, and by the evening of April 20, some twenty thousand New Englanders were besieging the British garrison in Boston. On May 10 the Green Mountain Boys, led by Ethan Allen, overran Fort Ticonderoga on Lake Champlain, partly with the intent of using its captured cannon in the siege of Boston. That same day, the Second Continental Congress convened in Philadelphia. Most delegates still opposed independence and at Dickinson’s urging agreed to send a “loyal message” to George III. Dickinson composed what became known as the Olive Branch Petition; excessively polite, it nonetheless presented three demands: a cease-fire at Boston, repeal of the Coercive Acts, and negotiations to establish guarantees of American rights. Events quickly overtook this effort at reconciliation. The Olive Branch Petition reached London at the same time as news of a battle fought just outside Boston on June 17. In this engagement British troops attacked colonists entrenched on Breed’s Hill and Bunker Hill. Although successfully



dislodging the Americans, the British suffered 1,154 casualties out of 2,200 men, compared to a loss of 311 patriots. After Bunker Hill many Britons wanted retaliation, not reconciliation, and on August 23 the king proclaimed New England in a state of rebellion. In December Parliament declared all the colonists rebellious and made their ships subject to seizure.

### *The Failure of Reconciliation*

Despite the turn of events, most colonists clung to hopes of reconciliation. Even John Adams, who believed in the inevitability of separation, described himself as “fond of reconciliation, if we could reasonably entertain Hopes of it on a constitutional basis.” Yet while pleading for peace, delegates to the Continental Congress passed measures that Britain could only construe as rebellious. In particular, they voted in May 1775 to establish an “American continental army” and appointed George Washington its commander.

Still, most colonists resisted independence, partly because they clung to the notion that evil ministers rather than the king were forcing unconstitutional measures on them and partly because they expected that saner heads would rise to power in Britain. On both counts they were wrong. The Americans exaggerated the influence of Pitt, Burke, Wilkes (who finally took his seat in Parliament in 1774), and their other friends in Britain. For example, when Burke proposed in March 1775 that Parliament acknowledge the colonists’ right to raise and dispose of taxes, he was voted down by a thumping majority in Parliament. In August George III declared the colonies to be in “open and avowed rebellion,” and four months later Parliament outlawed all trade with them.

The colonists’ sentimental attachment to the king, the last emotional barrier to their accepting independence, finally crumbled in January 1776 with the publication of Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense*. A failed corsetmaker and schoolmaster, Paine immigrated to the colonies from England late in 1774 with a letter of introduction from Benjamin Franklin, a penchant for radical politics, and a gift for writing plain and pungent prose that anyone could understand.

Paine told Americans what they had been unable to bring themselves to say: monarchy was an institution rooted in superstition, dangerous to liberty, and inappropriate to Americans. The king was “the royal brute” and a “hardened, sullen-tempered Pharaoh.” Whereas previous writers had maintained that an English con-

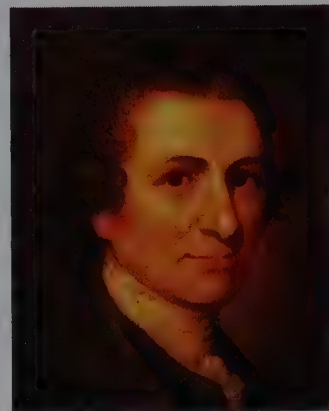
spiracy against American liberty was being directed by certain corrupt politicians, Paine argued that such a conspiracy was rooted in the very institutions of monarchy and empire. Moreover, he argued, America had no economic need for the British connection. As he put it, “The commerce by which she [America] hath enriched herself are the necessities of life, and will always have a market while eating is the custom in Europe.” In addition, he pointed out, the events of the preceding

six months had made independence a reality. Finally, Paine linked America’s awakening nationalism with the sense of religious mission felt by many in New England and elsewhere when he proclaimed, “We have it in our power to begin the world over again. A situation, similar to the present, hath not happened since the days of Noah until now.” America, in Paine’s view, would be not only a new nation but a new *kind* of nation, a model society founded on new principles and unburdened by the oppressive beliefs and institutions of the European past.

Printed in both English and German, *Common Sense* sold more than 100,000 copies within three months, equal to one for every fourth or fifth adult male. The Connecticut Gazette described it as “a landflood that sweeps all before it.” By the spring of 1776, Paine’s pamphlet was stimulating local gatherings of colonists—in artisan guilds, town meetings, militia musters, and numerous other settings—to pass resolutions favoring American independence. *Common Sense* had dissolved lingering allegiance to George III and removed the last psychological barrier to independence.

### *Declaring Independence*

John Adams described the movement toward independence as a coach drawn by thirteen horses, which could not reach its destination any faster than the slowest ones were willing to run. New England was already in rebellion, and Rhode Island declared itself indepen-



**Thomas Paine**

*Having arrived in the colonies less than two years earlier, Paine became a best-selling author with the publication of Common Sense (1776).*

1775

## A PLACE IN TIME

## Concord, Massachusetts

About 2 A.M. on April 19, 1775, the alarm bell in Concord, Massachusetts, started to ring furiously. Normally, it summoned men to turn out with fire buckets, but on this night drowsy citizens (including the town's minister, Reverend William Emerson) ambled toward the town square clutching muskets. Concord's minutemen were gathering to oppose 750 British troops marching to seize arms and ammunition stored in their town. Concord's mobilization on that chilly spring night was sure evidence that the colonies were teetering on the brink of revolution.

Until recently, the citizens had been loyal British subjects. Like other rural New Englanders, they had been indifferent to the British Empire's political crisis until they had debated Boston's circular letter of November 20, 1772. Thereafter, Concord's town meeting endorsed a steady flow of correspondence from Boston denouncing unconstitutional parliamentary laws. In June 1774, 80 percent of Concord's men signed a strongly worded pledge to boycott British goods until the Coercive Acts were repealed. By March 6, 1775, all but three men in town had sworn to uphold the Continental Congress against Massachusetts's royal governor, General Thomas Gage. Within the brief span of thirty months, Concord had shed its apathy and become united in resisting the Coercive Acts.

As dawn approached, the townspeople hid bullets and gunflints throughout their houses, concealed gunpowder in the woods, and buried cannon and muskets. Fifteen-year-old Millicent Barrett, the granddaughter of the minutemen's colonel, supervised teenage girls in the manufacture of cartridges. Reinforcements for Concord's 150 minutemen arrived from nearby towns. Word came that the British had opened fire on Lexington's minutemen, but no one knew if blood had been shed.

At daybreak Captain David Brown marched his company toward Lexington and promptly ran into the British. Sizing up the situation, Brown swung back to Concord with drums beating and fifes squealing. "We had grand music," Corporal Amos Barrett later recalled. Badly outnumbered, Colonel James Barrett evacuated the town center and took up position on high ground overlooking the Concord River bridge to await reinforcements.

After posting a guard at the bridge, just out of the minutemen's range, the British scoured the town for military equipment. Much of what little remained behind was saved by the town's women, who outwitted redcoats sent to search their homes. Mrs. Amos Wood tricked an officer who correctly suspected the presence of hidden ammunition into believing that a locked room sheltered panic-stricken women. "I forbid anyone entering this room," com-

manded the chivalrous Englishman. Hannah Barnes bluffed a search party out of entering a room that contained a chest filled with money needed to buy additional military supplies.

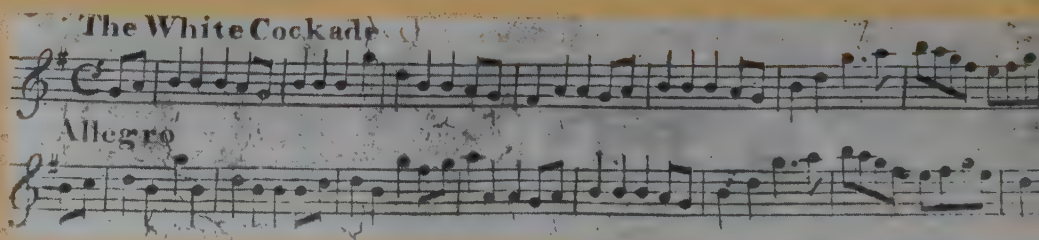
The British regulars dumped five hundred pounds of bullets into a pond, destroyed sixty barrels of flour, and found two cannon. They also accidentally set fire to the courthouse and a blacksmith shop, which they saved before serious damage resulted. But the minutemen on the ridge became enraged by the rising smoke.

"Will you let them burn the town down?" screamed Lieutenant Joseph Hosmer at Colonel Barrett. Now commanding four hundred men, Barrett decided to reenter the town and led his men toward the hundred redcoats guarding the bridge. The British withdrew across the river and fired several warning shots. One round wounded Luther Blanchard, a fifer who had been merrily playing a marching tune. Suddenly, smoke billowed from the British ranks and musketballs whistled across the water. Captain Isaac Davis and Private Abner Hosmer, volunteers from nearby Acton, fell dead. "For God's sake, fire," shouted Captain Jonathan Buttrick to his Concord company, which shot a volley at the British that killed three soldiers and wounded nine others.

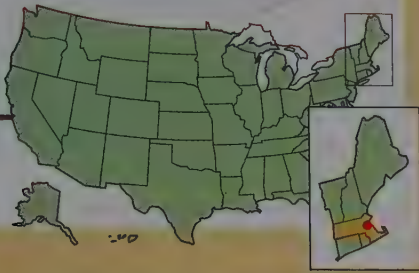
The skirmish lasted only two or three minutes. The British withdrew to the town center. The minutemen

### "The White Cockade"

*Fifer Luther Blanchard and drummer Francis Barker played this martial tune shortly before the skirmish near the bridge.*





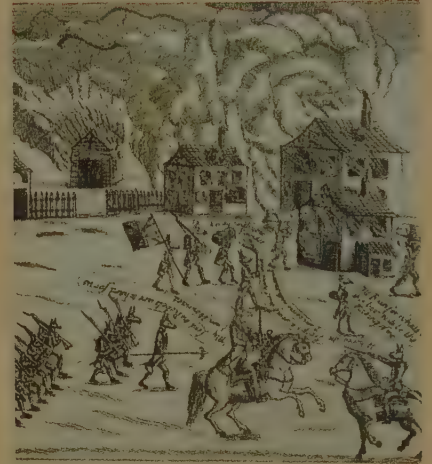


crossed the river but then broke ranks and milled about in confusion. Both sides kept their distance until noon, when the British started to march back to Boston.

The British delay in leaving Concord allowed hundreds of minutemen to arrive from neighboring towns. At Meriam's Corner, these reinforcements began harassing the redcoats in a running battle that continued for sixteen miles. "Every man," recalled Private Thaddeus Blood, "was his own commander." By day's end almost three

hundred royal troops were killed, wounded, or missing, and eighty colonists lay dead or injured.

Concord citizens escaped the day with slight losses: four men wounded, none dead. The war, however, had barely begun, and during the coming months, Concord sent off every able-bodied man between the ages of eighteen and forty to serve in the army. After the war the fight at the bridge assumed mythic dimensions for Americans, who celebrated the patriots who dared death at "the rude bridge that arched the flood" and "fired the shot heard 'round the world." But Concord citizens were too familiar with the events to romanticize them. In 1792 they unsentimentally tore up the historic bridge and built a more convenient crossing several hundred yards downriver.



### British Looters

*A colonial cartoonist caught the redcoats in a looting spree during their retreat from Concord.*

### A View of the Town of Concord, 1775, by Ralph Earl



dent in May 1776. The middle colonies hesitated to support revolution because they feared, correctly, that the war would largely be fought over control of Philadelphia and New York. Following the news in April that North Carolina's congressional delegates were authorized to vote for independence, the South began pressing for separation. Virginia's extralegal legislature instructed its delegates at the Second Continental Congress to propose independence, which Richard Henry Lee did on June 7. Formally adopting Lee's resolution on July 2, Congress created the United States of America.

The task of drafting a statement to justify the colonies' separation from England fell to a committee of five, including John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson, with Jefferson as the principal author. Among Congress's revisions to Jefferson's first draft were its insertion of the phrase "pursuit of happiness" in place of "property" in the Declaration's most famous sentence, and its deletion of a statement blaming George III for foisting the slave trade on unwilling colonists. The Declaration of Independence never mentioned Parliament by name—even though the central point of dispute since 1765 had been Parliament's legislative powers—because Congress was unwilling to imply, even indirectly, that it held any authority over America. Jefferson instead followed England's own Bill of Rights, which had sharply reduced monarchical power after the Glorious Revolution (see Chapter 4), as well as Paine, and focused on the king. He listed twenty-seven "injuries and usurpations" committed by George III against the colonies. And he drew on a familiar line of radical thinking when he added that the king's actions had as their "direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states."

Also like Paine, Jefferson elevated the colonists' grievances from a dispute over English freedoms to a struggle of universal dimensions. In the tradition of Locke and other Enlightenment figures, Jefferson argued that the English government had violated its contract with the colonists, thereby giving them the right to replace it with a government of their own design. His eloquent emphasis on the equality of all individuals and their natural entitlement to justice, liberty, and self-fulfillment expressed the Enlightenment's deepest longing for a government that would rest on neither legal privilege nor exploitation of the majority by the few.

Jefferson addressed the Declaration of Independence as much to Americans uncertain about the wis-

dom of independence as to world opinion, for even at this late date a significant minority opposed independence or hesitated to endorse it. Above all he wanted to convince his fellow citizens that social and political progress could no longer be accomplished within the British Empire. But he left unanswered just who among Americans was and was not included among those considered equal to one another and entitled to liberty. All the colonies endorsing the declaration countenanced, on grounds of racial inequality, the enslavement of blacks and severe restrictions on the freedoms of blacks who were not enslaved. Moreover, all had property qualifications that prevented many white men as well as African Americans from voting. The declaration's proclamation that "all men" were created equal accorded with the Anglo-American assumption that women could not and should not function politically or legally as autonomous individuals. And Jefferson's accusation that George III had unleashed "the merciless Indian savages" on innocent colonists seemed to place Native Americans outside the bounds of humanity.

Was the Declaration of Independence, then, a statement that expressed the sentiments of but a minority of colonists? In a very narrow sense it was, but it was at the same time something much greater. For the ideas motivating Jefferson and his fellow delegates had also moved thousands of ordinary colonists to political action over the preceding eleven years, both on their own personal behalf and on that of the colonies in their quarrel with Britain. For better or worse, the struggle for national independence had hastened, and become intertwined with, a quest for equality and personal independence that, for many Americans, transcended boundaries of class, race, or gender. In their reading, the declaration never claimed that perfect justice and equal opportunity existed in the United States; rather, it challenged the Revolutionary generation and all who later inherited the nation to bring this ideal closer to reality.

## CONCLUSION

In 1763 Britain emerged from its conflict with France as the world's most powerful nation. Yet just over a decade later, its mighty empire was shattered by the North American colonies' Declaration of Independence. In attempting to centralize imperial authority and, particularly, to force the colonies to contribute more revenue to the British treasury, English officials



confronted the ambitions and attitudes of Americans who felt themselves to be in every way equal to Britons.

Throughout the long imperial crisis, Americans had repeatedly pursued the goal of reestablishing the empire as it had functioned before 1763, when colonial trade had been protected and encouraged by the Navigation Acts, and when colonial assemblies had exercised exclusive power over taxation and internal legislation. But political and social dynamics in both Britain and the colonies had brought about an entirely different outcome.

The conflict between empire and colonies quickly passed from differences over the merits of various revenue-raising measures to more fundamental issues. First, people asked, who had the authority, as the people's representatives, to levy taxes on the colonists? Failing to resolve that question to everyone's satisfaction, colonists began to debate whether Parliament had any authority at all in the colonies. Finally, Americans were led—with help from the recent English immigrant Thomas Paine—to challenge the legitimacy of Britain's monarchy itself.

Americans by no means followed a single path to the point of advocating independence. Ambitious elites resented British efforts to curtail colonial autonomy as exercised almost exclusively by members of their own class in the assemblies. They and many more in the middle classes were angered by British policies that made commerce less profitable as an occupation and more costly to consumers. But others, including both frontier dwellers and poor and working urban people, like George Robert Twelves Hewes, defied conventions demanding that humble people defer to the authority of their social superiors. Sometimes resorting to violence,

they directed their wrath toward British officials and colonial elites alike. In so doing they contributed to anti-authoritarian, republican sentiments that were beginning to sweep throughout the Atlantic world.

America's reluctant revolutionaries now had to face the might of Europe's greatest imperial power and win their independence on the battlefield. They also had to struggle over interpreting and implementing the idealistic vision evoked in Jefferson's declaration. Neither task would prove simple or easy.

## FOR FURTHER READING

- Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (1967). A probing discussion of the ideologies that shaped colonial resistance to British authority.
- Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837* (1992). A major study of the formation of political identity in Great Britain, providing an important perspective on relations between the empire and its North American colonies.
- Edward Countryman, *The American Revolution* (1985). An outstanding introduction to the Revolution, its background, and its consequences.
- Robert A. Gross, *The Minutemen and Their World* (1976). An eloquent and evocative examination of Concord, Massachusetts, in the Revolutionary era.
- Pauline Maier, *From Resistance to Revolution: Colonial Radicals and the Development of American Opposition to Britain, 1765–1776* (1972). An insightful, definitive account of how colonial elite leaders mobilized colonists to resist British policies, eventually arriving at the point of open rebellion.
- Mary Beth Norton, *Liberty's Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1750–1800* (1980). A wide-ranging discussion of the experiences and roles of women in eighteenth-century colonial society and the American Revolution.
- Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815* (1991). An innovative study of the contest for control of the Ohio Valley.

# 6

## Securing Independence, Defining Nationhood 1776–1788



George Washington [1777] by Charles Peale Polk, c. 1792–1793





In November 1775 General George Washington ordered Colonel Henry Knox (page 151) to bring the British artillery recently captured at Fort Ticonderoga to reinforce the siege of Boston. Washington knew firsthand of the difficulties of wilderness travel, especially in the winter, and he must have wondered if this city-bred officer was up to the task. Only twenty-five years old and a Boston bookseller with little experience in the woods, Knox was nevertheless the army's senior artillerist, largely because he had read several books on the subject while business in his store was dull.

Knox and his men built crude sleds to haul their fifty-nine cannons through dense forest covered by two feet of snow. On good days they moved these sixty tons of artillery about seven miles. On two very bad ones, they shivered for hours in freezing water while retrieving guns that had fallen through the ice at river crossings. As their oxen grew weak from overexertion and poor feed, the men had to throw their own backs into pulling the cannons across New York's frozen landscape. On reaching the Berkshire Mountains in western Massachusetts, their pace slowed to a crawl as they trudged uphill through snow-clogged passes. Forty days and three hundred miles after leaving Ticonderoga, Knox and his exhausted New Yorkers reported to Washington in late January 1776. The Boston bookseller had more than proved himself: he had accomplished one of the Revolution's great feats of endurance.

The guns from Ticonderoga placed the outnumbered British in a hopeless position and forced them to evacuate Boston on March 17, 1776. A lifelong friendship formed between Washington and Knox. Knox served on the Virginian's staff throughout the war and accepted his request to be the nation's first secretary of war in 1789.

Friendships like the one between Washington and Knox were almost as revolutionary as the war that produced them. Because inhabitants of different colonial regions had little opportunity to become acquainted before 1775, their outlooks were largely confined within those regions. This regionalism was well entrenched at the start of the war. George Washington at first described New Englanders as "an exceeding dirty and nasty people." Yankee soldiers irritated troops from the southern colonies with smug assumptions of superiority expressed in their popular marching song "Chester," whose rousing lyrics rang out:

Let tyrants shake their iron rod,  
and slavery clank her galling chains.  
We fear them not, we trust in God.  
New England's God forever reigns.

The Revolution gave northerners and southerners their first real chance to learn what they had in common, and they soon developed mutual admiration. George Washington, who in the war's early days dismissed New England officers as "the most indifferent kind of people I ever saw," changed his mind after meeting men like Henry Knox.

In July 1776 the thirteen colonies had out of desperation declared independence and joined together in a loosely knit confederation of states. But only as a result of the collective hardships experienced during eight years of terrible fighting did the inhabitants of the thirteen states cease to see themselves simply as military allies and begin to accept one another as fellow citizens.

Even while the war was still under way, a nation was formalized with the adoption of the Articles of Confederation. But Americans remained divided over a number of basic political questions relating to the distribution of power and authority. These divisions were

apparent in some states' struggles to adopt constitutions and, even more forcefully, in the contests over writing and ratifying a new national Constitution. The ratification of the Constitution marked the passing of America's short-lived Confederation and a triumph for those favoring more centralization of power at the national level.

This chapter focuses on three major questions:

- ◆ What were the most critical factors enabling the Americans to win the War of Independence with Britain?
- ◆ In what ways did the Revolution advance the ideals of liberty and equality in American society, and in what ways did it stifle them?
- ◆ Why did it take the new nation twelve years, from the Declaration of Independence until the ratification of the Constitution, to design a lasting form of national government?

## America's First Civil War

The Revolution was both a collective struggle that marched a sizable portion of the American people against Britain and a civil war between inhabitants of North America. Eventually, it would degenerate into a brothers' war of the worst kind, conducted without restraint, mutual respect, or compassion. From a military standpoint, the Revolution's outcome depended not

only on the ability of the supporters of independence, called the patriots, or Whigs, to wear down the British army but also on the rebels' success in suppressing fellow Americans' opposition to independence.

### *Loyalists and Other British Sympathizers*

As late as January 1776, most colonists still hoped that declaring independence from Britain would not be necessary. Not surprisingly, when separation came six months later, many Americans remained unconvinced that it was justified. About 20 percent of all whites either opposed the rebellion actively or refused to support the Continental Congress unless threatened with fines or imprisonment. Although these internal enemies of the Revolution called themselves loyalists, they were "Tories" to their Whig foes. Whigs remarked, but only half in jest, that "a tory was a thing with a head in England, a body in America, and a neck that needed stretching."

Loyalists avowed many of the same political values as did the patriots. Like the rebels, they usually opposed Parliament's claim to tax the colonies. Many loyalists thus found themselves fighting for a cause with which they did not entirely agree, and as a result many of them would change sides during the war. Most doubtless shared the apprehension expressed in 1775 by the Reverend Jonathan Boucher, a well-known Maryland loyalist, who preached with two loaded pistols lying on his pulpit cushion: "For my part I equally dread a Victory by either side."



### **A British View of the Loyalists**

*This British cartoon depicts Americans as "savage" Indian warriors massacring helpless loyalists. It is also critical of Prime Minister Lord Shelburne for failing to protect the loyalists.*



## CHRONOLOGY

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| <p><b>1770</b> Yearly meeting of New England Quakers prohibits slaveowning—first American ban on slaveholding.</p> <p><b>1772</b> <i>Somerset</i> decision in England.</p> <p><b>1775</b> Virginia governor Lord Dunmore promises freedom to any slave assisting in the restoration of royal authority.</p> <p><b>1776</b> British troops evacuate Boston. British drive American forces from New York City. American victory in Battle of Trenton. Cherokees attack North Carolina frontier.</p> <p><b>1777</b> American victory in Battle of Princeton. British general John Burgoyne surrenders at Saratoga. Battle of Brandywine Creek; British occupy Philadelphia. British victory in Battle of Germantown. Congress approves Articles of Confederation.</p> | <p><b>1778</b> France formally recognizes the United States. France declares war on Britain. British troops evacuate Philadelphia; American victory in Battle of Monmouth Court House (New Jersey). Joseph Brant leads Iroquois attacks in western Pennsylvania and New York.</p> <p><b>1779</b> Spain declares war on Britain. George Rogers Clark recaptures Vincennes. John Sullivan leads U.S. raids in Iroquois country. Judith Sargent Murray writes "On the Equality of the Sexes" (published 1790).</p> <p><b>1780</b> British seize Charles Town. Dutch Republic declares war on Britain.</p> <p><b>1781</b> Articles of Confederation become law. Battle of Yorktown; British general Cornwallis surrenders.</p> <p><b>1782</b> Paris peace negotiations begin. Rhode Island rejects national import duty.</p> | <p><b>1783</b> Peace of Paris. Newburgh Conspiracy. Treaty of Augusta.</p> <p><b>1784</b> Spain closes New Orleans to American trade. Economic depression begins. Second Treaty of Fort Stanwix.</p> <p><b>1785</b> Ordinance of 1785. Treaty of Fort McIntosh.</p> <p><b>1786</b> Congress rejects Jay-Gardoqui Treaty. Treaty of Fort Finney. Joseph Brant organizes Indian resistance to U.S. expansion. Virginia adopts Thomas Jefferson's Statute for Religious Freedom.</p> <p><b>1786–1787</b> Shays's Rebellion in Massachusetts.</p> <p><b>1787</b> Northwest Ordinance. Philadelphia Convention; federal Constitution signed.</p> <p><b>1788</b> Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay, <i>The Federalist</i>. Federal Constitution ratified.</p> |
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Loyalists disagreed, however, with the patriots' insistence that only independence could preserve the colonists' constitutional rights. The loyalists denounced separation as an illegal act certain to ignite an unnecessary war. Above all, they retained a profound reverence for the crown and deeply believed that if they failed to defend their king, they would sacrifice their personal honor.

Toward loyalists collectively, patriot Whigs reserved an intense hatred, far greater than their antipathy toward the British army, and loyalists responded with equal venom. Each side saw its cause as so sacred that opposition by a fellow American was an unforgivable act of betrayal. The worst atrocities commit-

ted during the war were inflicted by Americans upon each other.

The most important factor in determining loyalist strength in any area was the degree to which local Whigs successfully convinced the public that representative government was endangered by the king and Parliament. Town leaders in New England, the Virginia gentry, and the rice planters of South Carolina's sea-coast had vigorously pursued a program of political education and popular mobilization from 1772 to 1776. Repeatedly explaining the issues at public meetings, these elites persuaded the overwhelming majority in favor of resistance. As a result, probably no more than 5 percent of whites in these areas were committed loyal-

ists in 1776. Where leading families acted indecisively, however, their communities remained divided when the fighting began. Because the gentry of New York and New Jersey were especially reluctant to declare their allegiance to either side, the proportion of loyalists was highest there. Those two states eventually furnished about half of the 21,000 Americans who fought in loyalist military units.

The next most significant factor influencing loyalist military strength was the geographic distribution of recent British immigrants, who remained closely identified with their homeland. Among these newcomers were thousands of British soldiers who had served in the Seven Years' War and then stayed on in the colonies, usually in New York, where they could obtain land grants of two hundred acres. Furthermore, more than 125,000 English, Scots, and Irish landed from 1763 to 1775—the greatest number of Britons to arrive during any dozen years of the colonial era. In New York, Georgia, and the backcountry of North and South Carolina, where native-born Britons were heavily concentrated, the proportion of loyalists among whites probably ranged from 25 percent to 40 percent in 1776. In wartime the British army organized many Tory units comprising immigrants from the British Isles, including the Loyal Highland Emigrants, the North Carolina Highlanders, and the Volunteers of Ireland. After the war foreign-born loyalists composed a majority of those compensated by the British for property losses during the Revolution—including three-quarters of all such claimants from the Carolinas and Georgia.

Other North Americans supported the British cause, not out of loyalty to the crown but from a perception that an independent American republic would pose the greater threat to their own liberty and independence. A few German, Dutch, and French religious congregations doubted that their rights would be as safe in an independent nation dominated by Anglo-Americans. Yet on balance, these groups provided few loyalists. The great majority of German colonists in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, for example, had embraced emergent American republicanism by 1776 and would overwhelmingly support the Revolutionary cause.

Canada's French Catholics comprised the most significant white minority to hold pro-British sympathies. Although the British had conquered them in the Seven Years' War, the Quebec Act of 1774 reversed Britain's failed policy in Acadia (see Chapter 5) by guaranteeing

Canadians' religious freedom and their continued, partial use of French civil law. Remembering that the American colonists had denounced this measure and demanded its repeal, French Catholics worried that their privileges would disappear if they were absorbed into an independent Protestant America. Canadian anxieties intensified in 1775, when Continental forces marched into Canada and attacked Quebec but suffered defeat. French Catholics emerged from the shock of invasion more loyal to the crown than ever before.

The rebels never even attempted to win over three other mainland colonies—Nova Scotia and East and West Florida—whose small populations of mainly recent immigrants were firmly dominated by British military authorities. Nor was independence seriously considered in Britain's thirteen West Indian colonies, which were dominated by absentee plantation owners who lived in England and depended on the protected British market for selling their sugar exports.

The British cause would also draw significant wartime support from nonwhites. As a deeply alienated group within society, slaves quickly responded to calls for "liberty" and "equality." In 1766, when a group of African-American slaves, inspired by the protests against the Stamp Act, had marched through Charles Town, South Carolina, shouting "Liberty!" they had faced arrest for inciting a rebellion. Thereafter unrest among slaves—usually in the form of violence or escape—kept pace with that among free colonists. Then in 1772 a court decision in England electrified much of the African-American population. A Massachusetts slave, James Somerset, whose master had taken him to England, sued for his freedom. Writing for the King's Court, Lord Chief Justice William Mansfield ruled that because Parliament had never explicitly established slavery, no court could compel a slave to obey an order depriving him of his liberty.

Although the *Somerset* decision applied only within England, African Americans seized upon it in a number of ways. In January 1773 some of Somerset's fellow Massachusetts slaves filed the first of three petitions to the legislature, arguing that the decision should be applied in the colony as well. In Virginia and Maryland, dozens of slaves ran away from their masters and sought passage aboard ships bound for England. As Anglo-American tensions mounted in 1774, many slaves looked for war and the arrival of British troops as a means to their liberation. The young James Madison feared that "if America and Britain come to a hostile



rupture, I am afraid an insurrection among the slaves may and will be promoted" by England.

Madison's fears were borne out in 1775 when Lord Dunmore, governor of Virginia, promised freedom to any slave who enlisted in the cause of restoring royal authority. About eight hundred blacks joined him before he fled the colony. Meanwhile, hundreds of South Carolina slaves had escaped and taken refuge on British ships in Charles Town's harbor. During the war at least twenty thousand enslaved African Americans ran away to sign on as laborers or soldiers in the Royal Army. Among the slaveholders who saw many of his slaves escape to British protection was Thomas Jefferson.

Although the Native American population was divided, most supported the British. Indians along the frontier recognized the danger to their homelands posed by expansion-minded Anglo-Americans. As had been the case since midcentury, tensions ran especially high in the Ohio Country. There, Shawnees, Delawares, Mingos, and other Indians continued to bristle at white incursions, as did the Cherokees to the south. Native Americans in the Upper Great Lakes, after the uprising of 1763 (see Chapter 5), had developed good rapport with British agents in the former French forts and were solidly in the British camp. The Iroquois and Creek confederacies, whose neutrality had been a source of strength until the French defeat in 1760, were now divided. The Creeks' allegiance reflected each village's earlier trade ties with either Britain or Spain (the latter leaned toward the colonists' cause). Most Iroquois followed the lead of the English-educated Mohawk chief Joseph Brant in supporting Britain. Only the Oneidas and Tuscaroras, influenced by Congregationalist missionary Samuel Kirkland, sided with the rebels. Native Americans in upper New England and the Canadian maritime provinces and in the Illinois and Wabash Valleys initially took an anti-British stand because of earlier ties with the French, though many of them became alienated from the colonists during the war. Most of the relatively small number of Indians living in the established colonies supported the rebellion.

### *The Opposing Sides*

Britain entered the war with two major advantages. First, in 1776 the 11 million inhabitants of the British Isles greatly outnumbered the 2.5 million colonists, one-third of whom were either slaves or loyalists. Second, Britain possessed the world's largest navy and one of its best professional armies. Nevertheless, the royal mili-

tary establishment grew during the war years to a degree that strained Britain's resources. The army more than doubled from 48,000 to 111,000 men, not only in North America but also in the British Isles and the West Indies. To meet its manpower needs, the British government hired 30,000 German mercenaries known as Hessians and later enlisted 21,000 loyalists.

Despite its smaller population, the new nation mobilized about 220,000 troops—compared to the 162,000 who served in the British army. But most Americans served short terms, and the new nation would have been hard-pressed had it not been for the contributions of its French allies in the war's later stages.

Britain's ability to crush the rebellion was further weakened by the decline in its seapower that had resulted from peacetime budget cuts after 1763. Midway through the war, half of the Royal Navy's ships sat in dry dock awaiting major repairs. Although the navy expanded rapidly from 18,000 to 111,000 sailors, it lost 42,000 men to desertion and 20,000 to disease or wounds. In addition, Britain's merchant marine suffered mightily from raids by American privateers. During the war rebel privateers and the fledgling U.S. Navy would capture over 2,000 British merchant vessels and 16,000 crewmen.

Britain could ill afford these losses, for it faced a colossal task in trying to supply its troops in America. In fact, almost all the food consumed by the army, a third of a ton per soldier per year, had to be imported from Britain. Seriously overextended, the navy barely kept the army supplied and never effectively blockaded American ports.



**Woodcut from "A New Touch on the Times . . . By a Daughter of Liberty, Living in Marblehead," 1779**

*Americans on the home front as well as in the front lines experienced crippling wartime hardships. This illustration of a female partisan holding a musket accompanied a poem by Molly Gutridge, whose theme was women's sacrifice and suffering in a seaport economy upset by war.*

Mindful of the enormous strain that the war imposed, British leaders faced serious problems maintaining their people's support for the conflict. The war more than doubled the national debt, thereby adding further to the burdens of a people already paying record taxes. The politically influential landed gentry could not be expected to vote against their pocketbooks forever.

The new nation faced different but no less severe wartime problems. One-fifth of its free population, a large but uncertain proportion of enslaved southerners, and most Native Americans favored the British. Although the state militias sometimes performed well in hit-and-run guerrilla skirmishes and were also effective in intimidating loyalists and in requisitioning war supplies, they lacked the training to fight pitched battles against professional armies like Britain's. Congress recognized that independence would never be secured if the new nation relied on guerrilla tactics, avoided major battles, and allowed the British to occupy all major population centers. Moreover, because European powers would interpret dependence on guerrilla warfare as evidence that Americans could not drive out the British army, that strategy would doom efforts by the Continental Congress to gain foreign loans, diplomatic recognition, and military allies.

The Continental Army thus had to fight in the standard European fashion of the times. Professional eighteenth-century armies relied on expert movements of mass formations. Victory often depended on rapid maneuvers to crush an enemy's undefended flank or rear. Attackers needed exceptional skill in close-order drill in order to fall on an enemy before the enemy could reform and return fire. Because muskets had a range of under one hundred yards, armies in battle were never far apart. Battles usually occurred in open country with space for maneuver. The troops advanced within musket range of each other, stood upright without cover, and fired volleys at one another until one line weakened from its casualties. Discipline, training, and nerve were essential if soldiers were to stay in ranks while comrades fell beside them. The stronger side then attacked at a quick walk with bayonets drawn and drove off its opponents.

In 1775 Britain possessed a well-trained army with a strong tradition of discipline and bravery under fire. In contrast, the Continental Army had neither an inspirational heritage nor many experienced officers or sergeants who might turn raw recruits into crack units. Consequently, the Americans experienced a succession of heartbreaking defeats in the war's early years. Yet to

win the war, the Continentals did not have to destroy the British army but only prolong the rebellion until Britain's taxpayers lost patience with the struggle. Until then, American victory would hinge heavily on the ability of one man to keep his army fighting despite defeat. He was George Washington.

### *George Washington*

Few generals ever looked and acted the role as much as Washington. He spoke with authority and comported himself with dignity. At six feet two inches, he stood a half-foot taller than the average man of his day. Powerfully built, athletic, and hardened by a rugged outdoor life, he was one of the war's few generals whose presence on the battlefield could inspire troops to heroism.

Washington's military experience began at age twenty-two, when he had taken command of a Virginia regiment raised to resist French claims. Washington's early military experience—his mistakes and lost battles in the Ohio Valley (see Chapter 5)—taught him lessons that he might not have learned from easy, glorious victories. He discovered the dangers of overconfidence and the need for determination in the face of defeat. He also learned much about American soldiers, especially that they performed best when led by example and treated with respect.

With Virginia's borders safe from attack in 1758, Washington had resigned his commission and become a tobacco planter. He had sat in the Virginia House of Burgesses, where his influence had grown, not because he thrust himself into every issue but because others respected him and sought his opinion. Having emerged as an early, though not outspoken, opponent of parliamentary taxation, he had also sat in the Continental Congress. In the eyes of the many who valued his advice and remembered his military experience, Washington was the logical choice to head the Continental Army.

### *War in Earnest*

Henry Knox's successful transport of artillery from Ticonderoga to Boston prompted the British to evacuate Boston in March 1776 and to move on to New York, which they wished to seize and use as a base for conquering New England. Under two brothers—General William Howe and Admiral Richard, Lord Howe—130 warships carrying 32,000 royal troops landed near New York harbor in the summer of 1776. Defending New



York, America's second-largest city, were 18,000 poorly trained soldiers under George Washington.

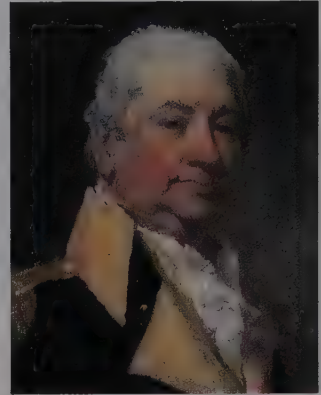
By the end of the year, William Howe's men had killed or taken prisoner one-quarter of Washington's troops and had driven the survivors into headlong retreat from New York across New Jersey and the Delaware River into Pennsylvania. Thomas Paine accurately described these demoralizing days as "the times that try men's souls."

With the British in striking distance of Philadelphia, Washington decided to seize the offensive before the morale of his army and country collapsed completely. On Christmas night, 1776, he led his troops back into New Jersey and attacked a Hessian garrison at Trenton, where he captured 918 Germans and lost only 4 Continentals. Washington then attacked 1,200 British at Princeton on January 3, 1777, and killed or took captive one-third of them while sustaining only 40 casualties.

These American victories at Trenton and Princeton had several important consequences. At a moment when defeat seemed inevitable, they boosted civilian and military morale. In addition, they drove a wedge between New Jersey's five thousand loyalists and the British army. Washington's victories forced the British early in 1777 to remove virtually all their New

Jersey garrisons to New York, while Washington established winter quarters at Morristown, New Jersey, only twenty-five miles from New York City.

New Jersey loyalism never recovered from the blow it received when the British evacuated the state. The state militia disarmed known loyalists, jailed their leaders, and kept a constant watch on suspected Tories. Ironically, the British themselves contributed to the undermining of New Jersey loyalism, for prior to the Battle of Trenton, British commanders had failed to prevent an orgy of looting by their troops that victimized loyalists and Whigs equally. Surrounded by armed enemies and facing constant danger of arrest, most loyalists who remained in the state bowed to the inevitable and swore allegiance to the Continental Congress; more than a few ex-loyalists themselves joined the rebel militia.



**Henry Knox**

*One of Washington's most trusted officers, Knox went on to serve as the first president's Secretary of War.*

### **The Battle of Princeton (1777)** by James Peale, c. 1790

*In the battle's first phase, fought south of the town, the American advance guard clashed with redcoats who were en route to Trenton, where they planned to link up with Lord Cornwallis. The British had the upper hand until George Washington and the main Continental force arrived, attacked, and drove them off.*





### The War in the North, 1776–1779

Following the British evacuation of Boston, the war shifted to New York City, which the British held from 1776 to 1783. In 1777 Britain's success in taking Philadelphia was offset by defeat in upstate New York. The hard-fought battle of Monmouth Court House, New Jersey, ended the northern campaigns in 1778.

### The Turning Point

Shortly after the battles of Trenton and Princeton, the Marquis de Lafayette, a young French aristocrat, joined Washington's staff. Lafayette was twenty years old, highly idealistic, very brave, and infectiously optimistic. Given Lafayette's close connections with the French court, his presence in America indicated that the

French king, Louis XVI, might recognize American independence and perhaps declare war on Britain. Before recognizing the new nation, however, Louis wanted proof that the Americans could win a major battle, a feat they had not yet accomplished.

Louis did not have to wait long. In the summer of 1777, the British planned a two-pronged assault in-



tended to crush American resistance in New York State and thereby isolate New England. Pushing off from Montreal, a force of regulars and their Iroquois allies, marching under Lieutenant Colonel Barry St. Leger, would proceed south along Lake Ontario and invade central New York from Fort Oswego in the west. At the same time General John Burgoyne would lead the main British force south from Quebec through eastern New York and link up with St. Leger near Albany.

Nothing went according to British plans in New York. St. Leger's force of 1,900 British and Iroquois advanced 100 miles and halted to besiege 750 New York Continentals at Fort Stanwix. Unable to take the post after three weeks, St. Leger retreated in late August 1777.

Burgoyne's campaign appeared more promising after his force of 8,300 British and Hessians took Fort Ticonderoga, about a hundred miles north of Albany. But Burgoyne's supply lines were overstretched, and he lost at Bennington, Vermont. Meanwhile General Horatio Gates gathered nearly 17,000 American troops for an attack. Gates fought two indecisive battles near Saratoga in the fall, inflicting another 1,200 casualties on Burgoyne. Surrounded and hopelessly outnumbered, Burgoyne's 5,800 troops honorably laid down their arms on October 17, 1777. The diplomatic impact of the Battle of Saratoga rivaled its military significance and made it the war's turning point.

The victory at Saratoga convinced France that the Americans could win the war and thus deserved diplomatic recognition. In February 1778 France formally recognized the United States. Four months later, it went to war with Britain. Spain declared war on Britain in 1779, but as an ally of France, not the United States, and the Dutch Republic joined them in the last days of 1780. Now facing a coalition of enemies, Britain had no allies.

The American allies soon made their presence felt. Between 1779

and 1781, Spanish troops based in Louisiana drove the British from West Florida, effectively preventing Britain from taking the Mississippi Valley. Beginning in 1781, French troops also contributed to rebel victories. Moreover, Britain sent thousands of soldiers to Ireland and the West Indies to guard against French invasion, thus reducing the manpower available to fight in North America. The French and Spanish navies, which together approximately equaled the British fleet, won several large battles, denied Britain control of the sea, and punctured the Royal Navy's blockade.

### *The Continentals Mature*

While Gates and Burgoyne maneuvered in upstate New York, General Howe landed 18,000 troops near Philadelphia in late August. With Washington at their head and Lafayette at his side, 16,000 Continentals occupied the imperiled city.

The two armies collided on September 11, 1777, at Brandywine Creek, Pennsylvania. In the face of superior British discipline, not only did most Continental units crumble but Congress soon fled Philadelphia in panic, enabling Howe to occupy the city. Howe again defeated Washington at Germantown on October 4. In one month's bloody fighting, 20 percent of the Continentals were killed, wounded, or captured.

While the British army wintered comfortably eighteen miles away in Philadelphia, the Continentals huddled in the bleak hills of Valley Forge. Despite severe shortages of food, clothing, and shelter, the troops somehow preserved a sense of humor, which they occasionally demonstrated by joining together in a thousand voices to squawk like crows watching a cornfield. Underlying these squawks was real hunger: James Varnum reported on December 20 that his Connecticut and Rhode Island troops had gone the two previous days without meat and three days without bread.

The army slowly regained its strength but still lacked training. The Continentals had forced Burgoyne to surrender more by their overwhelming numbers than by their skill. Indeed, when Washington's men had met Howe's forces on equal terms, they lost badly. The Americans mainly lacked the ability to march as compact units and maneuver quickly. Regiments often straggled single-file into battle and then wasted precious time forming to attack, and few troops were expert in bayonet drill.

The Continental Army's ill-trained recruits received a desperately needed boost in February 1778, when the



**Thaddeus Kosciuszko,**  
engraving by Gabriel Fiesinger, 1798

*A Polish military engineer, Kosciuszko contributed significantly to several American victories during the Revolution. After the war, he led an unsuccessful effort to overthrow Poland's king.*

German soldier of fortune Friedrich von Steuben arrived at Valley Forge. The short, squat Steuben did not look like a soldier, but this earthy German instinctively liked Americans and became immensely popular. He had a talent for motivating men (sometimes by staging humorous tantrums featuring a barrage of German, English, and French swearing); but more important, he possessed administrative genius. In a mere four months, General Steuben almost single-handedly turned the army into a formidable fighting force.

General Henry Clinton, now British commander-in-chief, evacuated Philadelphia in mid-1778 and marched to New York. The Continental Army got its first opportunity to demonstrate Steuben's training when it caught up with Clinton's rear guard at Monmouth Court House, New Jersey, on June 28, 1778. The battle raged for six hours in one-hundred-degree heat until Clinton broke off contact. Expecting to renew the fight at daybreak, the Americans slept on their arms, but Clinton's army slipped away before then. The British would never again win easily, except when they faced more militiamen than Continentals.

The Battle of Monmouth ended the contest for the North. Clinton occupied New York, which the Royal Navy made safe from attack. Washington kept his army nearby to watch Clinton. Meanwhile, the Whig militia hunted down the last few Tory guerrillas and extinguished loyalism.

### *Frontier Campaigns*

A different kind of war developed west of the Appalachians and along the western borders of New York and Pennsylvania. The numbers engaged in these frontier skirmishes were relatively small, but the fighting was fierce and the stakes—for the new nation, for the British, and for Indians in the region—were high. In 1776 few Americans had a clear notion of their nation's western boundaries; by 1783, when the Peace of Paris concluded the war, the Confederation could assert its claim to the Mississippi River as its western border. So although the frontier campaigns did not determine the outcome of the war, they had a significant impact on the future shape of the United States.

Frontier fighting erupted first in the South, where Cherokees began attacking settlers from Virginia to Georgia in 1776. After suffering heavy losses, the southern colonies recovered and organized retaliatory expeditions. Within a year these expeditions had burned most Cherokee towns, forcing the Cherokees

to sign treaties that ceded most of their land in South Carolina and substantial tracts in North Carolina and Tennessee.

Elsewhere the intense fighting lasted longer. Largely independent of American and British coordination, natives and settlers fought for two years in Kentucky with neither side gaining a clear advantage (see *A Place in Time*). But after British troops occupied French settlements in what are now Illinois and Indiana, Colonel George Rogers Clark led 175 Kentucky militiamen north of the Ohio River. After capturing and losing the French community of Vincennes on the Wabash River, Clark retook the settlement for good in February 1779. With the British unable to offer assistance, the Indians were vulnerable. In May, John Bowman led a second Kentucky unit in a campaign that destroyed most Shawnee villages, and in August a move northward from Pittsburgh by Daniel Brodhead inflicted similar damage on the Delawares and the Seneca Iroquois. Although these raids depleted their populations and food supplies, most Ohio Indians resisted the Americans until the war's end.

In the East pro-British Iroquois, led by the gifted Mohawk leader Joseph Brant, devastated the Pennsylvania and New York frontiers in 1778. They killed 340 Pennsylvania militia at Wyoming, Pennsylvania, and probably slew an equal number in their other raids. In 1779 the American general John Sullivan retaliated by invading Iroquois country with 3,700 Continentals and several hundred Tuscaroras and Oneidas. Sullivan fought just one battle, near present-day Elmira, New York, in which his artillery routed Brant's warriors. After he burned two dozen Indian villages and destroyed a million bushels of corn, most Iroquois fled without food into Canada. Untold hundreds starved during the next winter, when more than 60 inches of snow fell.

In 1780 Brant's thousand warriors fell upon the Tuscaroras and Oneidas and then laid waste to Pennsylvania and New York for two years. But this final whirlwind of Iroquois fury masked reality: Sullivan's campaign had destroyed the Iroquois peoples' heartland, and their population declined by about one-third during the eight-year war.

### *Victory in the South*

After 1778 the war's focus shifted to the South. With the entry of France and Spain into the war, the conflict had acquired international dimensions; Britain was suddenly locked in a struggle that raged from India to





British had no interest in emancipating slaves, and British officials made every effort to return the run-aways to loyalist owners or otherwise to keep them in bondage. But plantation owners were angry about the loss of many slaves and fearful that the wholesale rupturing of their authority would lead to a black uprising. Despite British efforts to placate them, many former loyalists abandoned their support of the British and welcomed the return to power of the rebels in 1782. Those who remained loyalists, embittered by countless instances of harsh treatment under patriot rule, lost little time in taking revenge. Patriots struck back whenever possible. So began an escalating cycle of revenge, retribution, and retaliation that engulfed the Lower South through 1782.

But the southern conflict was not all personal feuds and guerrilla warfare. After the capture of Charles Town, General Horatio Gates took command in the South. With only a small force of Continentals at his disposal, however, Gates had to rely on poorly trained militiamen. In August 1780 Cornwallis inflicted a crushing defeat on Gates at Camden, South Carolina. Fleeing after firing a single volley, Gates's militia left his badly outnumbered Continentals to be overrun. Camden was the worst rebel defeat of the war.

Washington and Congress responded by relieving Gates of command and sending General Nathanael Greene to confront Cornwallis. Greene subsequently fought three major battles between March and September 1781, and he lost all of them. "We fight, get beat,



### The War in the South, 1778–1781

By 1780 Britain held the South's major cities, Charles Town and Savannah, but could not establish control over the backcountry because of resistance from Nathanael Greene's Continentals. By invading Virginia, Lord Cornwallis placed himself within striking distance of American and French forces, a decision that rapidly led to the British surrender at Yorktown in October 1781.



## Surrender of the British

*French naval power combined with American military savvy to produce the decisive defeat of the British at Yorktown.*



rise, and fight again," he wrote back to Washington. Still, Greene won the campaign, for he gave the Whig militia the protection they needed to hunt down loyalists, stretched British supply lines until they began to snap, and sapped Cornwallis's strength by inflicting much heavier casualties than the British general could afford. Greene's dogged resistance forced Cornwallis to leave the Carolina backcountry in American hands and to lead his battered troops into Virginia.

Secure in New York City, Clinton wanted Cornwallis to return to Charles Town and renew his Carolina campaign; but Cornwallis had a mind of his own and established a new base at Yorktown, Virginia, near the coast. From Yorktown Cornwallis hoped to fan out into Virginia and Pennsylvania, but he never got the chance. Cornwallis's undoing began on August 30, 1781, when a French fleet dropped anchor off the Virginia coast and landed troops near Yorktown. Soon Lafayette joined them, leading a small force of Continentals. Meanwhile, Washington made enough feints at New York City to prevent Clinton from coming to Cornwallis's aid and then moved his army south to tighten the noose around the British. Trapped in Yorktown, Cornwallis's 6,000 British stood off 8,800 Americans and 7,800 French for three weeks. They finally surrendered with military honors on October 19, 1781.

## The Peace of Paris

"Oh God!" Lord North exclaimed upon hearing of Yorktown, "It's all over." Indeed, Cornwallis's surrender drained the will of England's overtaxed people to fight and forced the government to commence peace negotiations. John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, and John Jay were America's principal diplomats at the peace talks in Paris, which began in June 1782.

Military realities largely influenced the terms of the peace. Britain recognized American independence and agreed to the evacuation of all royal troops from the new nation's soil. Although the vast majority of Americans lived in the thirteen states clustered near the eastern seaboard, the British had little choice but to award the Confederation all lands east of the Mississippi, for by 1783 twenty thousand Anglo-Americans lived west of the Appalachians, and Clark's victories had given Americans control of the Northwest. The treaty also gave the new nation important fishing rights off the Grand Banks of Canada.

On the whole, the settlement was highly favorable to the Confederation, but it did not resolve all disputes. In a separate treaty, Britain transferred East and West Florida back to Spain, but the boundaries designated by this treaty were ambiguous. Spain interpreted the treaty to mean that it regained the same Florida territory that

it had ceded to Britain in 1763. But Britain's treaty with the Confederation named the thirty-first parallel as the Floridas' northern border, well south of the area claimed by Spain. Spain and the new nation would dispute the northern boundary of Florida until 1795.

The Peace of Paris also planted the seeds of several future disputes between Britain and the Americans. Although the new nation promised to urge the state legislatures to compensate loyalists for their property losses and agreed that no legal bars would prevent British creditors from collecting prewar debts, several state governments later refused to pay back loyalists and erected barriers against British creditors. In response, the British failed to honor their treaty pledge to return slaves confiscated by their troops.

Notably missing in the Peace of Paris was any reference to Native Americans, most of whom had supported the British in order to avert the alternative—an independent American republic that would be no friend to Indian interests. In effect the treaty left the native peoples to deal with this new republic on their own, without any provision for their status or treatment. Not surprisingly, many Native Americans did not acknowledge the new nation's claims to sovereignty over their territory.

The Peace of Paris ratified American independence, but winning independence had exacted a heavy price. At least 5 percent of all free white males aged sixteen to forty-five died in the war. If the present-day U.S. population fought a war with comparable casualties, 12.5 million people would be killed. Only the Civil War produced a higher ratio of casualties to the nation's popu-

lation. Furthermore, the war drove perhaps one of every six loyalists and several thousand slaves into exile in Canada, Britain, or the West Indies. Fleeing loyalists accounted for perhaps as much as 20 percent of New York's white population. When the British evacuated Savannah in 1782, 15 percent of Georgia's whites accompanied them. Most whites who departed were recent British immigrants. Finally, although the war secured American independence, it did not settle two important issues: what kind of society America was to become and what sort of government the new nation would possess. Yet the war had a profound impact on both questions.

## Revolutionary Society

Two forces shaped the social effects of the Revolution: first, the principles articulated in the Declaration of Independence; and second, the dislocations caused by the war itself. These factors combined to change relationships between members of different classes, races, and genders momentarily.

### *Egalitarianism*

Between 1700 and 1760, social relations between elites and the common people had grown more formal, distant, and restrained. Members of the colonial gentry had emphasized their social position by living far beyond the means of ordinary families. By the late 1760s, however, many in the upper classes began wearing homespun rather than imported English clothes in support of the boycott of British goods and subsequently watched their popularity soar. When Virginia planters organized minutemen companies in 1775, they threw away their expensive militia uniforms and dressed in homespun hunting shirts; then even the poorest farmer would not be too embarrassed to enlist because of his humble appearance. By 1776 the anti-British movement had persuaded many elites to maintain the appearance, if not the substance, of equality with common people.

Then came war, which accelerated the erosion of class differences by forcing the gentry, who held officers' rank, to show respect to the ordinary folk serving as privates. Indeed, the soldiers demanded to be treated with consideration, especially in light of the ringing words of the Declaration of Independence, "All men are created equal." The soldiers would follow

**American Foot Soldiers, Yorktown Campaign**  
by Jean-Baptiste-Antoine DeVerger, 1781





commands, but not if they were addressed as inferiors.

The best officers realized this fact immediately. Some, among them General Israel Putnam of Connecticut, went out of their way to show that they felt no superiority to their troops. While inspecting a regiment digging fortifications around Boston in 1776, Putnam saw a large stone nearby and told a noncommissioned officer to throw it onto the outer wall. The individual protested, "Sir, I am a corporal." "Oh," replied Putnam, "I ask your pardon, sir." The general then dismounted his horse and hurled the rock himself, to the immense delight of the troops working there.

A majority of men of military age were exposed to treatment of this sort in the course of the war. Soldiers came to expect that their worth as individuals would be recognized by their officers, at least within the limits of the army. After these common soldiers returned to civilian life, they retained a sense of self-esteem and insisted on respectful treatment. As these feelings of personal pride gradually translated into political behavior and beliefs, many candidates took care not to scorn the common people. The war thus subtly but fundamentally democratized Americans' political assumptions.

The gentry's sense of social rank also diminished as they met men who rose through ability rather than through advantages of wealth or family. The war produced numerous examples like James Purvis, the illiterate son of a nonslaveowning Virginia farmer, who joined the First Virginia Regiment as a private in 1775, soon rose to sergeant, and then taught himself to read and write so that he could perform an officer's duties. Captain Purvis fought through the entire war and impressed his well-born officers as "an uneducated man, but of sterling worth." As elites saw more and more men like Purvis performing responsibilities previously thought to be above their station in life, many developed a new appreciation that a person's merit was not always related to his wealth.

Not all those who considered themselves republicans welcomed the apparent trend toward democracy. Especially among elites, many continued to insist that each social class had its own particular virtues and that a chief virtue of the lower classes was deference to those possessing the wealth and education necessary to govern. Writing to John Adams in 1778, Mercy Otis Warren observed that while "a state of war has ever been deemed unfavorable to virtue, . . . such a total change of manners in so short a period . . . was never

known in the history of man. Rapacity and profusion, pride and servility, and almost every vice is contrasted in the same heart."

Nevertheless, most Revolutionary-generation Americans came to insist that virtue and sacrifice defined a citizen's worth independently of his wealth. Voters widely began to view members of the "natural aristocracy"—those who had demonstrated fitness for government service by personal accomplishments—as the ideal candidates for political office. This natural aristocracy had room for a few self-made men such as Benjamin Franklin, as well as for those, like Jefferson and John Hancock, born into wealth. Voters still elected the wealthy to office, but not if they flaunted their money. The new emphasis on equality did not extend to propertyless males, women, and nonwhites, but it undermined the tendency to believe that wealth or distinguished family background conferred a special claim to public office.

### *A Revolution for Black Americans*

The wartime situation of African Americans contradicted the ideals of equality and justice for which Americans were fighting. About 500,000 black persons—20 percent of the total population—inhabited the United States in 1776, of whom all but about 25,000 lived in bondage. Even those who were free could not vote, lived under curfews and other galling restrictions, and lacked the guarantees of equal justice held by the poorest white criminal. Free blacks could expect no more than grudging toleration, and few slaves ever gained their freedom.

Although the United States was a "white man's country" in 1776, the war opened some opportunities to African Americans. Amid the confusion of war, some slaves, among them Jehu Grant of Rhode Island, ran off and posed as free persons. Grant later recalled his excitement "when I saw liberty poles and the people all engaged for the support of freedom, and I could not but like and be pleased with such a thing."

In contrast to the twenty thousand who joined British forces, approximately five thousand African Americans served in the Continental forces, most from the North. Even though the army late in 1775 forbade the enlistment of any African Americans, black soldiers were already fighting in units during the siege of Boston, and the ban on black enlistments started to collapse in 1777. The majority were slaves serving with their masters' consent, usually in integrated units.

1778

## Boonesborough, Kentucky

In the half-century of war that consumed North America, nowhere was the fighting more intense and bitter than in the Ohio River valley, or "Ohio country." For imperial visionaries in France, Britain, and the newly independent United States, the Ohio country—linking the eastern seaboard to the vast Mississippi Valley—was the key to continental and even global power. For Native Americans and white settlers, it was a means of securing liberty and a livelihood. Among the region's original inhabitants were the Shawnees, driven from the upper Ohio in the 1680s by Iroquois warriors and dispersed to other parts of eastern North America. A half-century later, Shawnees began returning to find a homeland where English and French traders visited Indian towns regularly and sometimes married native women and Native Americans used scissors and needles to fashion European cloth into

garments and iron tools to build log cabins and guns, powder, and shot to hunt. Alcohol was a staple at Indian social gatherings. Delawares, Mingos, Miamis, and other Native Americans were, like the Shawnees, moving to the Ohio country to be near traders and far from English or Iroquois neighbors. Despite the changes, the Ohio country was at peace and remained Indian country where Shawnees and other Native Americans maintained the customs and beliefs of their grandparents.

Midcentury saw a sudden influx of European settlers from Pennsylvania into what colonists called the "back-country" (the Appalachian Mountains and lands west). They too came to extract a living without being bound by scarce resources or outside authorities and adopted many Indian practices. Many immigrant men spent fall and winter hunting deer and trapping beaver, learned from Native Americans

the lay of the land, the ways of its animals, and the advantage of Indian moccasins and buckskin.

A young North Carolinian named Daniel Boone pursued game in the upper Ohio country, where in 1769 he was seized by Shawnees and held for two years. Undaunted, Boone attempted to lead kinfolk and neighbors into the land known as Kentucky in 1773 but was turned back by attacking Indians. Two years later, Boone was hired by land speculators to guide a roadbuilding crew through the Cumberland Gap and founded the town of Boonesborough on the upper Kentucky River in April 1775.

Although Boonesborough celebrated news of the Declaration of Independence in July 1776, veterans of the North Carolina Regulator movement sided against their eastern enemies who favored independence. Others wanted no contact with outside authorities and tried to remain neutral. Many were animated by anti-British sentiments and tried to preserve personal independence by siding with the patriots. Finally, many simply followed other family members in joining either Tories or Whigs.

Some Shawnees too sought to remain neutral. Others sided with Blackfish, a renowned war leader from Chillicothe who felt the war would allow Shawnees to regain lands south of the Ohio, which the Iroquois had ceded to Britain and the colonies in 1768. Finally, some Shawnees saw no hope for peace and moved west.

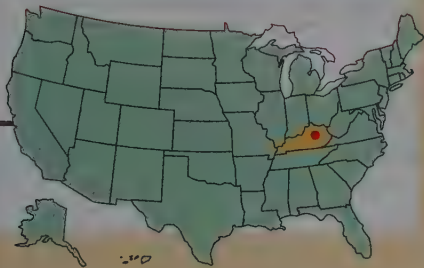
In 1777 Blackfish led two war parties against Boonesborough and in February 1778 captured Boone and 26 other Boonesborough men. The men were publicly paraded before Chillicothe villagers seeking to adopt individuals to replace dead family members. Half the captives were taken to British authorities in Detroit for bounties. The

### Daniel Boone Escorting Settlers Through the Cumberland Gap, 1851–52 by George Coleb Bingham

*Bingham's is the best known of the many prints and paintings depicting this singular moment in colonial westward expansion.*







rest, including Boone, were adopted, Boone by Blackfish himself to replace a son killed in an earlier raid on Boonesborough. Boone was bathed in the river, plucked of all hair except for a scalplock that hung from the top of his head to one side, and dressed for his naming ceremony. Blackfish then welcomed his adopted son Sheltowee ("Big Turtle") into his family.

Several captives feared that Boone's adoption meant he might betray them to the Shawnees or British, but in June he escaped and returned to Boonesborough. Townspeople suspected Boone's intentions but agreed to prepare for an anticipated attack by securing the stockade and expanding the food supply. On the morning of September 7, 1778, 60 fighting men and other residents of Boonesborough watched as 400 Shawnees plus a British militia unit from Detroit emerged from the woods to within rifle range of the stockade. A young African man, Pompey, captured as a boy from a Virginia plantation and Chillicothe's English translator, stepped forward to summon Boone to come out and speak with his father Blackfish. After the two men embraced and exchanged gifts, Blackfish lamented his son's escape and hoped they could now reunite, with the townspeople surrendering and accompanying the Shawnees to Detroit. Boone agreed to consult with his men and report back the next day. Although Boone would have been willing to take his chances and surrender, the rest of the men vowed to fight to the death. Boone then said, "Well, well, I'll die with the rest."

The next day Boonesborough's leading men emerged from the stockade to welcome their Shawnee counterparts to join them in an elaborate feast. They were repaying Blackfish and his people for their earlier hospitality but also wanted to imply they had enough

provisions to withstand a prolonged siege. When Blackfish asked his son for Boonesborough's decision, Boone replied that the men had vowed to fight to the death. Blackfish expressed great sorrow and made another offer: the adversaries would recognize the Ohio as the boundary dividing them but allow one another to cross the river freely to hunt or visit. The Americans asked for time to consider the offer. What happened next occurred so suddenly that participants could not later recall the details. Declaring that peace was now at hand, Blackfish called on his leading men to embrace their Boonesborough counterparts, but the white men sensed a trap and fought their way past the approaching Shawnees and into the stockade, while riflemen on both sides unleashed torrents of gunfire.

For 17 days, both sides fired rifles while the Shawnees tried to burn the fort and tunnel toward it. Inside, men, women, children, free and slave, fired guns and prepared and distributed food. Boone's daughter, Gamma Caloway, was wounded while tending to the wounds of others. After a downpour collapsed their nearly completed tunnel, the exhausted and demoralized Shawnees withdrew.

The siege of Boonesborough had virtually no military significance in the colonies' war with Britain but was later remembered as a symbolic moment in the history of Kentucky (admitted to the union in 1792) and the American frontier, when outnumbered settlers defended their tiny world against a "savage" onslaught and made possible America's future growth and pros-

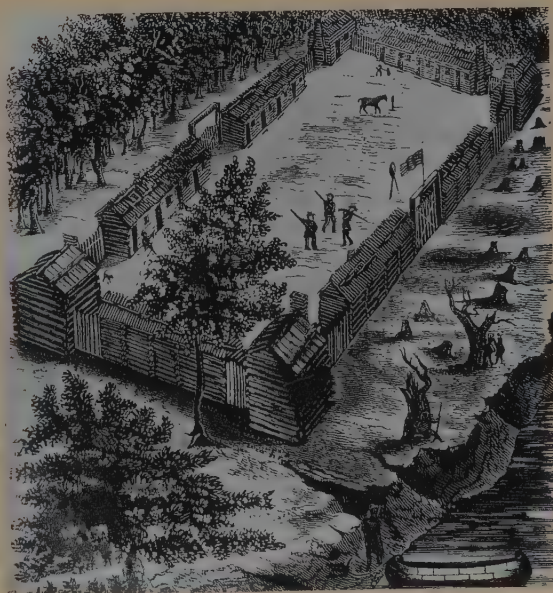


### Boonesborough During the Revolutionary Era

perity. Such remembering overlooked what settlers and Shawnees had shared and forgot that the siege's hero was far from certain of his own loyalties.

### Early drawing of Fort Boonesborough

*The townspeople of Boonesborough completed their stockade just in time to face the Shawnee-British siege of September 1778.*



For the most part, these wartime opportunities for African-American men grew out of the army's need for personnel rather than a white commitment to equal justice. In fact, until the mid-eighteenth century, few in the Western world had criticized slavery at all. Like disease and sin, slavery was considered part of the natural order. But in the decade before the Revolution, American opposition to slavery had swelled, especially as resistance leaders increasingly compared the colonies' relationship with Britain to that between slaves and a master. The first American prohibition against slaveowning came from the yearly meeting of the New England Quakers in 1770. The yearly meetings of New York and Philadelphia Quakers followed suit in 1776, and by 1779 Quaker slaveowners had freed 80 percent of their slaves.

Although the Quakers aimed mainly to abolish slaveholding within their own ranks, the Declaration of Independence's broad assertion of natural rights and human equality spurred a more general attack on the institution of slavery. Between 1777 and 1784, Vermont, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut ended slavery. New York did so in 1799, and New Jersey in 1804. New Hampshire, unmoved by petitions like that written in 1779 by Portsmouth slaves demanding liberty "to dispose of our lives, freedom, and property," never freed its slaves; but by 1810 there were none in the state.

The movement against slavery reflected the Enlightenment's emphasis on realizing equality through gradual change, initiated by leaders who carefully primed public opinion. The Revolutionary generation, rather than advocating slavery's immediate abolition, favored steps that would weaken the institution and in this way bring about its eventual demise. Most state abolition laws provided for gradual emancipation, typically declaring all children born of a slave woman after a certain date—often July 4—free. (Such individuals still had to work, without pay, for their mother's master for up to twenty-eight years.) Furthermore, the Revolution's leaders did not press for decisive action against slavery in the South, out of fear that widespread southern emancipation would either bankrupt or end the Union. They argued that the Confederation, already deeply in debt as a result of the war, could not finance immediate abolition in the South, and any attempt to do so without compensation would drive that region into secession. "Great as the evil is," observed Virginia's James Madison in 1787, "a dismemberment of the union would be worse."

Yet even in the South, slavery worried the consciences of some Whigs. When one of his slaves ran off to join the British and later was recaptured, Madison concluded that it would be hypocritical to punish the runaway "merely for coveting that liberty for which we have paid the price of so much blood." Still, Madison did not free the slave, and no state south of Pennsylvania abolished slavery. Nevertheless, every state but North Carolina passed laws making it possible for masters to manumit (set free) slaves without posting large sums of money as bond for their good behavior. By 1790 the number of free blacks in Virginia and Maryland had risen from about 4,000 in 1775 to nearly 21,000, or about 5 percent of all African Americans there.

These "free persons of color" faced the future as destitute, second-class citizens. Most had purchased their freedom by spending their small cash savings earned in off-hours and were past their physical prime. Once free, they found whites reluctant to hire them or to pay equal wages. Black ship carpenters in Charleston (formerly Charles Town), South Carolina, for example, earned one-third less than their white coworkers in 1783. Under such circumstances, most free blacks remained poor laborers, domestic servants, and tenant farmers. Even under such extreme disadvantages, some free blacks became landowners or skilled artisans, and a few gained recognition from whites. One of the best known was Benjamin Banneker of Maryland, a self-taught mathematician and astronomer. In 1789 Banneker was one of three surveyors who laid out the new national capital in Washington, D.C., and after 1791 he published a series of widely read almanacs. Sending a copy of one to Thomas Jefferson, Banneker chided the future president for holding views of black inferiority that contradicted his own words in the Declaration of Independence. Another prominent African American was the Boston poet and slave, Phillis Wheatley. Several of Wheatley's poems explicitly linked the liberty sought by colonists with a plea for the liberty of slaves, including one that was autobiographical:

I, young in life, by seeming cruel fate  
Was snatch'd from Afric's fancy'ed happy seat:

Such, such my case. And can I then but pray  
Others may never feel tyrannic sway?

Free blacks relied on one another for help. Self-help among African Americans flowed largely through





**Phillis Wheatley,  
African-American Poet**

*Though a slave, Wheatley was America's best-known poet at the time of the Revolution. Despite her fame, Wheatley died in poverty in 1784.*

religious channels. Because many white congregations spurned them and because racially separate churches provided mutual support, self-pride, and a sense of accomplishment, free blacks began founding their own Baptist and Methodist congregations after the Revolution. In 1787 black Methodists in Philadelphia started the congregation that by 1816 would become the African Methodist Episcopal church. Black churches, a great source of inner strength and community cohesion for African Americans ever since, had their origins in

the Revolutionary period.

Most states granted important civil rights to free blacks during and after the Revolution. Free blacks had not participated in colonial elections, but those who were male and met the property qualification gained this privilege everywhere by the 1780s. Most northern states repealed or stopped enforcing curfews and other colonial laws restricting African Americans' freedom of movement. These same states generally changed their laws to guarantee free blacks equal treatment in court hearings.

The Revolution neither ended slavery nor brought equality to free blacks, but it did begin a process by which slavery eventually could be extinguished. In half the nation, human bondage had been outlawed and white southerners increasingly viewed slavery as a necessary evil—an attitude that implicitly recognized its immorality. Slavery had begun to crack, and free blacks had made some gains. But this shift would prove short-lived when events in the 1790s squelched the move toward egalitarianism.

### ***White Women in the New Republic***

"To be adept in the art of Government is a prerogative to which your sex lay almost exclusive claim," wrote

Abigail Adams to her husband John in 1776. She was one of the era's shrewdest political commentators and her husband's political confidante and best friend, but she had no public role. Indeed, for most white women as well as men in the 1780s, a woman's duty was to maintain her household and raise her children.

Apart from the fact that some states eased women's difficulties in obtaining divorces, the Revolution did not significantly affect the legal position of white women. Women did not gain any new political rights, although New Jersey's 1776 constitution did not exclude white female property holders from voting, which they did in significant numbers until barred (along with free blacks) in 1807. The assumption that women were naturally dependent—either as children subordinate to their parents or as wives to their husbands—continued to dominate discussions of the female role. Nevertheless, the Revolutionary War and contemporary ideological currents emphasizing liberty and equality were significant for white American women.

White women's support of colonial resistance before Independence (see Chapter 5) broadened into an even wider range of support activities during the war. Female "camp followers," many of them soldiers' wives, served military units on both sides by cooking and laundering and by nursing the wounded. A few women, by disguising themselves as men, even joined in the fighting. Many more women remained at home, where they managed families, households, farms, and businesses on their own. After her civilian husband was seized by loyalists and turned over to the British on Long Island, Mary Silliman of Fairfield, Connecticut, tended to her four children (and bore a fifth), oversaw several servants and slaves, ran a commercial farm that had to be evacuated when the British attacked Fairfield, and launched appeals for her husband's release. Despite often enormous struggles, such experiences boosted white women's confidence in their abilities to think and act on matters traditionally reserved for men. "I have the vanity," wrote another Connecticut woman, Mary Fish, to a female friend, "to think I have in some measure acted the *heroine* as well as my dear Husband the Hero."

As with African Americans, the Revolutionary era witnessed the beginnings of a challenge to whites' traditional attitudes toward women. American republicans increasingly recognized the right of a woman to choose her husband—a striking departure from the practice, still prevalent among some elites, whereby marriages were approved or even arranged by fathers.

Thus in 1790, on the occasion of his daughter's marriage, Jefferson wrote to a friend that, following "the usage of my country, I scrupulously suppressed my wishes, [so] that my daughter might indulge her sentiments freely." Outside elite circles, such independence was even more apparent. Especially in the Northeast, daughters increasingly got pregnant by prospective husbands, thus forcing their fathers to consent to their marrying in order to avoid a public scandal. For example, Mary Brown's father objected to her wedding John Chamberlain in Hallowell, Maine, in May 1792. In December he finally consented and the couple wed, just two days before their daughter's birth. By becoming pregnant, northeastern women secured for themselves economic support in a region where an exodus of young, unmarried men left a growing number of women single.

**Judith Sargent Stevens (Murray)** by John Singleton Copley, c. 1770

*Drawing on discussions then going on in Europe, Judith Sargent Murray became the foremost advocate of women's rights at the end of the eighteenth century.*



White women also had fewer children overall than their mothers and grandmothers. In Sturbridge, Massachusetts, women in the mid-eighteenth century averaged nearly nine children per marriage, compared with just six in the first decade of the nineteenth century. Whereas 40 percent of Quaker women had nine or more children before 1770, only 14 percent bore that many thereafter. Such statistics testify to declining farm sizes and urbanization, both of which were incentives for having fewer children. But they also indicate that women were finding some relief from the near-constant state of pregnancy and nursing that consumed their forebears.

As white women's roles expanded, so too did republican notions of male-female relations. "I object to the word 'obey' in the marriage-service," wrote a female author calling herself Matrimonial Republican, "because it is a general word, without limitations or definition." "The obedience between man and wife," she continued, "is, or ought to be mutual." Lack of mutuality was one reason for a rising number of divorce petitions from women, from fewer than 14 per year in Connecticut before the Revolution, to 45 in 1795. A few women also challenged the sexual double standard that allowed men to indulge in extramarital affairs while their female partners, single or married, were condemned. Writing in 1784, an author calling herself Daphne pointed out how a woman whose illicit affair was exposed was "forever deprive[d] . . . of all that renders life valuable," while "the base [male] betrayer is suffered to triumph in the success of his unmanly arts, and to pass unpunished even by a frown." Daphne called on her "sister Americans" to "stand by and support the dignity of our own sex" by publicly condemning seducers rather than their victims.

Gradually, the subordination of women, which once was taken for granted among most whites, became the subject of debate. In the essay "On the Equality of the Sexes," written in 1779 and published in 1790, essayist and poet Judith Sargent Murray contended that the genders had equal intellectual ability and deserved equal education. "We can only reason from what we know," she wrote, "and if an opportunity of acquiring knowledge hath been denied us, the inferiority of our sex cannot fairly be deduced from there." Murray hoped that "sensible and informed" women would improve their minds rather than rush into marriage (as she had at eighteen), and would instill republican ideals in their children.



Like many of her contemporaries, Murray supported “republican motherhood.” Republicans emphasized the importance of educating white women in the values of liberty and independence in order to strengthen virtue in the new nation. It was the duty of women to inculcate these values in their sons as well as their daughters. Even so conservative a man as John Adams reminded his daughter that she was part of “a young generation, coming up in America . . . [and] will be responsible for a great share of the duty and opportunity of educating a rising family, from whom much will be expected.” After 1780 the urban upper class founded numerous private schools, or academies, for girls, and these provided to American women their first widespread opportunity for advanced education. Massachusetts also established an important precedent in 1789, when it forbade any town to exclude girls from its elementary schools.

By itself, however, the expansion of educational opportunities for white women would have little effect. “I acknowledge we have an equal share of curiosity with the other sex,” wrote Mercy Otis Warren to Abigail Adams, but men “have the opportunities of gratifying their inquisitive humour to the utmost, in the great school of the world, while we are confined to the narrow circle of domesticity.” Although the great struggle for female political equality would not begin until the next century, Revolutionary-era assertions that women were intellectually and morally men’s peers provoked scattered calls for political equality. In 1793 Priscilla Mason, a young woman graduating from one of the female academies, blamed “*Man*, despotic man” for shutting women out of the church, the courts, and government. In her salutatory oration, she urged that a women’s senate be established by Congress to evoke “all that is human—all that is *divine* in the soul of woman.”

Warren and Mason had pointed out a fundamental limitation to republican egalitarianism: besides being a virtuous wife and mother, there was little a woman could *do* with her education.

### ***Native Americans and the Revolution***

For Native Americans, the consequences of the United States’ triumph over Britain were less certain. Whereas Revolutionary ideology held out at least an abstract hope for blacks, white women, and others seeking equal rights and status in American society, it made no

provision for the many Indians who sought to maintain their political and cultural independence. Moreover, in an overwhelmingly agrarian society like the United States, the Revolution’s implicit promise of equal economic opportunity for all male citizens set the stage for territorial expansion beyond the areas already settled, thereby threatening Native American landholdings. Even where Indians retained land, the influx of settlers posed dangers to them in the form of deadly diseases, farming practices inimical to Indian subsistence (see Chapter 3), and alcohol. Indians were all the more vulnerable because, during the three decades encompassed by the Seven Years’ War and the Revolution (1754–1783), the native population east of the Mississippi had declined by about half, and many Indian communities had been uprooted.

In the face of these uncertainties, Native Americans continued their efforts to incorporate the most useful aspects of European culture into their own. From the beginning of the colonial period, Indians had selectively adopted European-made goods of cloth, metal, glass, and other materials into their lives. But Native Americans did not give up their older ways altogether; rather, their clothing, tools, weapons, utensils, and other material goods combined elements of the old and the new. Indians, especially those no longer resisting American expansion, also selectively participated in the American economy by working occasionally for wages or by selling food, crafts, or other products. This interweaving of the new with the traditional characterized Indian communities up and down the newly independent states. Even Indians west of the settled areas, who hoped to avert the takeover of their lands by the new republic, looked to the British in Canada or the Spanish in Florida for trade as well as for diplomatic and military support.

Native Americans, then, did not remain stubbornly rooted in traditional ways, nor did most of them resist participation in a larger world dominated by Europeans or Euro-Americans. But they did insist on retaining control of their communities and their ways of life. Ten years after the Treaty of Paris, an intertribal delegation bluntly told some American commissioners seeking their lands,

You have talked to us about concessions. It appears strange that you should expect any from us, who have only been defending our just rights against your invasion. We want peace; restore to us our country and we shall be enemies no longer.

In the Revolution's aftermath, it appeared doubtful that the new nation would accommodate Native Americans on such terms.

### ***The Revolution and Social Change***

The American Revolution left the overall distribution of wealth in the nation unchanged. Because the 3 percent of Americans who fled abroad as loyalists represented a cross-section of society, their departure left the new nation's class structure unaltered. Loyalists' confiscated estates tended to be bought up by equally well-to-do Whig gentlemen. Overall, the American upper class seems to have owned about as much of the national wealth in 1783 as it did in 1776.

In short, the Revolution did not obliterate social distinctions or even challenge most of them. Class distinctions, racial injustice, and the subordination of women persisted into the nineteenth century. In particular, the institution of slavery survived intact in the South, where the vast majority of African Americans lived. Yet the Revolutionary era set in motion significant social changes. Increasingly, the members of the gentry had to earn respect by demonstrating their competence and by treating the common people with dignity. The Revolution dealt slavery a decisive blow in the North, greatly enlarged the free-black population, and awarded free people of color important political rights. Although the momentous era did not bring white women political equality, it placed new issues pertaining to the relations between the genders on the agenda of national debate. And inevitably, the social changes wrought by the Revolution shaped the new nation's momentous political debates.

### **Forging New Governments**

Americans had drawn many political conclusions from the imperial crisis of the 1760s, including the conviction that without vigilance by the people, governments would become despotic. But before the Declaration of Independence was written, few colonists had given much thought to forming governments of their own. Although guiding and inspiring the Americans, the Continental Congress lacked the sovereign powers usually associated with governments, including the authority to impose taxes.

During the war years, rebels quickly recognized the need to establish government institutions to sustain the

war effort and to buttress the United States' claim to independent nationhood. But the task of forging a government would prove arduous, in part because of the inevitable upheavals of war. In addition, the state governments that Americans formed after the Declaration of Independence reflected two different and often conflicting impulses: on one hand, the traditional ideas and practices that had guided Anglo-Americans for much of the eighteenth century; on the other, the republican ideals that found a receptive audience in America in the 1760s and early 1770s.

"Can America be happy under a government of her own?" asked Thomas Paine in 1776. He answered his own question: "as happy as she pleases: she hath a blank sheet to write upon."

### ***Tradition and Change***

In establishing the Revolutionary state governments, patriots relied heavily on ideas about government inherited from the colonial experience. For example, most Whigs took for granted the value of bicameral legislatures. As we have seen, the colonial legislatures had consisted of two houses: an elected lower chamber (or assembly) and an upper chamber (or council) appointed by the governor or chosen by the assembly. These two-part legislatures resembled Parliament's division into the House of Commons and House of Lords and symbolized the assumption that a government should give separate representation to aristocrats and common people.

Despite the Revolution's democratic tendencies, few questioned the long-standing practice of setting property requirements for voters and elected officials. In the prevailing view, only the ownership of property, especially land, made it possible for voters to think and act independently. Whereas tenant farmers and hired laborers might sell their votes, mindlessly follow a demagogue, or vote to avoid displeasing their landlords or employers, property holders had the financial means and the education to express their opinions at the ballot box freely and responsibly. The association between property and citizenship was so deeply ingrained that even radicals such as Samuel Adams opposed allowing all males—much less women—to vote and hold office.

The notion that elected representatives should exercise independent judgment in leading the people rather than simply carry out the popular will also survived from the colonial period and restricted the democratization of politics. Although Americans today



take political parties for granted, the idea of parties as necessary instruments for identifying and mobilizing public opinion was alien to the eighteenth-century political temper, which equated parties with “factions”—selfish groups that advanced their own interests at the expense of the public good. In general, candidates for office did not present voters with a clear choice between policies calculated to benefit rival interest groups; instead, they campaigned on the basis of their personal reputations and fitness for office. As a result, voters did not know where office seekers stood on specific issues and hence found it hard to influence government actions.

Another colonial practice that persisted into the 1770s and 1780s was the equal (or nearly equal) division of legislative seats among all counties or towns, regardless of differences in population. Inasmuch as representation had never before been apportioned according to population, a minority of voters normally elected a majority of assemblymen. Additionally, many offices that later would become elective—such as sheriffs and justices of county courts—were appointive in the eighteenth century.

In sum, the colonial experience provided no precedent for a democratization of the United States during the Revolutionary era. Yet without intending to extend political participation, political elites found themselves pulled in a democratic direction by the logic of the imperial crisis of the 1760s and 1770s. The colonial assemblies, the most democratic parts of colonial government, had led the fight against British policy during Americans’ ideological clash with England, whereas the executive branch of colonial governments, filled by royal governors and their appointees, had repeatedly locked horns with the assemblies. Colonists entered the Revolution dreading executive officeholders and convinced that even elected governors could no more be trusted with power than could monarchs. Recent history seemed to confirm the message hammered home by British “country party” ideology (see Chapter 5) that those in power tended to become either corrupt or dictatorial. Consequently, Revolutionary statesmen proclaimed the need to strengthen legislatures at the governors’ expense.

Despite their preference for vesting power in popularly elected legislatures, Revolutionary leaders described themselves as republicans rather than democrats. Although used interchangeably today, these words had different connotations in the eighteenth century. At worst, democracy suggested mob rule; at best,

it implied the concentration of power in the hands of an uneducated multitude. In contrast, republicanism presumed that government would be entrusted to capable leaders, elected for their superior talents and wisdom. For most republicans, the ideal government would delicately balance the interests of different classes to prevent any one group from gaining absolute power. Some, including John Adams, thought that a republic could include a hereditary aristocracy or even a monarchy as part of this balance, but most thought otherwise. Having blasted one king in the Declaration of Independence, most political leaders had no desire to enthrone another. Still, their rejection of hereditary aristocracy and monarchy posed a problem for republicans as they set about drafting state constitutions: how to maintain balance in government amid pervasive distrust of executive power.

### *From Colonies to States*

The state governments that Americans constructed during the Revolution reflected a struggle between more radical, democratic elements and elites who would minimize popular participation. In keeping with colonial practice, eleven of the thirteen states maintained bicameral legislatures. In all but a few states, the great majority of officeholders, at both the state and the county level, were still appointed rather than elected. The most radical constitution, Pennsylvania’s, attempted to ensure that election districts would be roughly equal in population, so that a minority of voters could not elect a majority of legislators. Nine of the thirteen states reduced property requirements for voting, but none abolished such qualifications entirely, and most of the reductions were modest.

Yet the persistence of these conservative features should not obscure the pathbreaking components of the state constitutions. Above all, they were *written* documents whose adoption usually required popular ratification and which could be changed only if voters chose to amend them. In short, Americans jettisoned the British conception of a constitution as a body of customary arrangements and practices, insisting instead that constitutions were written compacts that defined and limited the powers of rulers. Moreover, as a final check on government power, the Revolutionary constitutions spelled out citizens’ fundamental rights. By 1784 all state constitutions included explicit bills of rights that outlined certain freedoms beyond government control. In sum, governments were no longer to

serve as the final judge of the constitutionality of their activities.

The earliest of those new state constitutions severely limited executive power in particular. In most states the governor became an elected official, and elections themselves occurred far more frequently. (Pennsylvania actually eliminated the office of governor altogether.) Prior to 1776 most colonial elections were called at the governor's pleasure, usually about every three or four years. In contrast, after 1776 each state scheduled annual elections except South Carolina, which held them every two years. In most states the power of appointments was transferred from the governor to the legislature. Legislatures usually appointed judges and could reduce their salaries or impeach them (try them for wrongdoing). By relieving governors of most appointive powers, denying them the right to veto laws, and making them subject to impeachment, the constitutions turned governors into figureheads who simply chaired an executive council that made militia appointments and supervised financial business.

As the new state constitutions weakened the executive branch and vested more power in the legislatures, they also made the legislatures more responsive to the will of the people. Nowhere could the governor appoint the upper chamber. Eight constitutions written before 1780 allowed voters to select both houses of the legislature, one (Maryland) used a popularly chosen "electoral college" for its upper house, and the remaining "senates" were filled by vote of their assemblies. Pennsylvania and Georgia abolished the upper house and substituted a unicameral (single-chamber) legislature. Americans' assault on the executive branch and their enhancement of legislative authority reflected their bitter memories of royal governors who had acted arbitrarily to dismiss assemblies and control government through their power of appointment, and it underscored the influence of "country-party" ideologues, who had warned that republics' undoing began with executive usurpation of authority.

In the first flush of revolutionary enthusiasm, elites had to content themselves with state governments dominated by popularly elected legislatures. Gradually, however, wealthier landowners, bankers, merchants, and lawyers reasserted their desires for centralized authority and the political prerogatives of wealth. In Massachusetts an elite-dominated convention in 1780 pushed through a constitution stipulating stiff property qualifications for voting and holding office, state senate

districts that were apportioned according to property values, and a governor with considerable powers in making appointments and vetoing legislative measures. The Massachusetts constitution signaled a general trend. Georgia and Pennsylvania substituted bicameral for unicameral legislatures by 1790. Other states raised property qualifications for members of the upper chamber in a bid to encourage the "senatorial element" and to make room for men of "Wisdom, remarkable integrity, or that Weight which arises from property."

The later state constitutions revealed a central feature of elites' thought. Gradations among social classes and restrictions on the expression of popular will troubled them far less than the prospect of tyranny by those in power. But some republican elites believed that social divisions, if deep-seated and permanent, could jeopardize liberty, and attempted to implement major social changes through legislation. In Virginia, for example, Thomas Jefferson in 1776 persuaded the Virginia legislature to abolish entails, legal requirements that prevented an heir and all his descendants from selling or dividing an estate. Although entails were easy to break through special laws—Jefferson himself had escaped the constraints of one—he hoped that their elimination would strip wealthy families of the opportunity to amass land continuously and become an overbearing aristocracy. Through Jefferson's efforts, Virginia also ended primogeniture, the legal requirement that the eldest son inherit all a family's property in the absence of a will. Jefferson hoped that these laws would ensure a continuous division of wealth. By 1791 no state provided for primogeniture, and just two still allowed entails.

These years also witnessed the end of state-established churches in most of the country. New England resisted this reform, and the Congregational church continued to collect tithes (church taxes) until 1817 in New Hampshire, 1818 in Connecticut, and 1833 in Massachusetts. But in states where colonial taxpayers had supported the Anglican Church, such support was abolished by 1786. Thomas Jefferson best expressed the ideal behind disestablishment in his Statute for Religious Freedom (1786), whose preamble resounded with a defense of religious freedom at all times and places. "Truth is great," proclaimed Jefferson, "and will prevail if left to itself."

The American Revolution, wrote Thomas Paine in 1782, was intended to ring in "a new era and give a new turn to human affairs." This was an ambitious declara-





### State Claims to Western Lands, and State Cessions to the Federal Government, 1782–1802

*Eastern states' surrender of land claims paved the way for new state governments in the West. Georgia was the last state to cede its western lands, in 1802.*

tion and seemed to conflict with the states' retention of institutions such as state senates and property requirements for voting. But Paine's point was that *all* political institutions, new and old alike, now were being judged by the standard of whether they served the public good rather than the interests of the powerful few. More than any single innovation of the era, it was this new way of thinking that made American politics revolutionary.

### The Articles of Confederation

As with their revolt against Britain and their early state constitutions, Americans' first national government reflected widespread fears of centralized authority and its potential for corruption. In 1776 John Dickinson, who had stayed in Congress despite having refused to sign the Declaration of Independence, drafted a proposal for a national government, which he called the Articles of

Confederation. Congress adopted a weakened version of the Articles and sent it to the states for ratification in 1777.

The Articles explicitly reserved to each state "its sovereignty, freedom and independence" and established a form of government in which Americans were citizens of their own states first and of the United States second. As John Adams later explained, the Whigs of 1776 never thought of "consolidating this vast Continent under one national Government" but instead erected "a Confederacy of States, each of which must have a separate government."

Under the Articles, the national government consisted of a single-chamber Congress, elected by the state legislatures, in which each state had one vote. Congress could request funds from the states but could enact no tax of its own without every state's approval, nor could it regulate interstate or overseas commerce.

The Articles did not provide for an executive branch. Rather, congressional committees oversaw financial, diplomatic, and military affairs. Nor was there a judicial system by which the national government could compel allegiance to its laws.

By 1781 the Articles had been approved by all thirteen states' legislatures and the Confederation was in place. The new nation had taken a critical step in defining the role of national sovereignty in relation to the sovereignty of the individual states. Whereas the Continental Congress had directed most of the war effort without defined powers, the nation now had a formal government. Nevertheless, many Americans' misgivings about centralized power left the Confederation government severely limited in important respects.

### *Finance, Trade, and the Economy*

Perhaps the greatest challenge facing the Confederation was putting the nation on a sound financial footing. Winning the war had cost the nation's 600,000 taxpayers a staggering \$160 million, a sum that exceeded by 2,400 percent the taxes raised to pay for the Seven Years' War. To finance the War for Independence, which cost far more than could be immediately collected through taxation, the government borrowed funds from abroad and printed its own paper money, called Continentals. Lack of public faith in the government destroyed 98 percent of the value of the Continentals from 1776 to 1781, an inflationary disaster that gave rise to the expression "not worth a Continental."

Faced with a desperate financial situation, Congress turned to a wealthy, self-made Philadelphia merchant, Robert Morris, who in 1781 became the nation's superintendent of finance. Morris proposed that the states authorize the collection of a national import duty of 5 percent to finance the congressional budget and to guarantee interest payments on the war debt. Because the Articles stipulated that every state had to approve the levying of national taxes, the import duty failed to pass in 1782 when Rhode Island alone rejected it.

Hoping to panic the country into creating a regular source of national revenue, Morris and New York congressman Alexander Hamilton then engineered a dangerous gamble known later as the Newburgh Conspiracy. In 1783 the two men secretly persuaded some army officers, then encamped at Newburgh, New York, to threaten a coup d'état unless the treasury obtained

the taxation authority needed to raise their pay, which was months in arrears. But George Washington, learning of the conspiracy before it was carried out, ended the plot by delivering a speech that appealed to his officers' honor and left them unwilling to proceed. Although Morris may never have intended that a coup actually occur, his willingness to take such a risk demonstrated the new nation's perilous financial straits and the vulnerability of its political institutions.

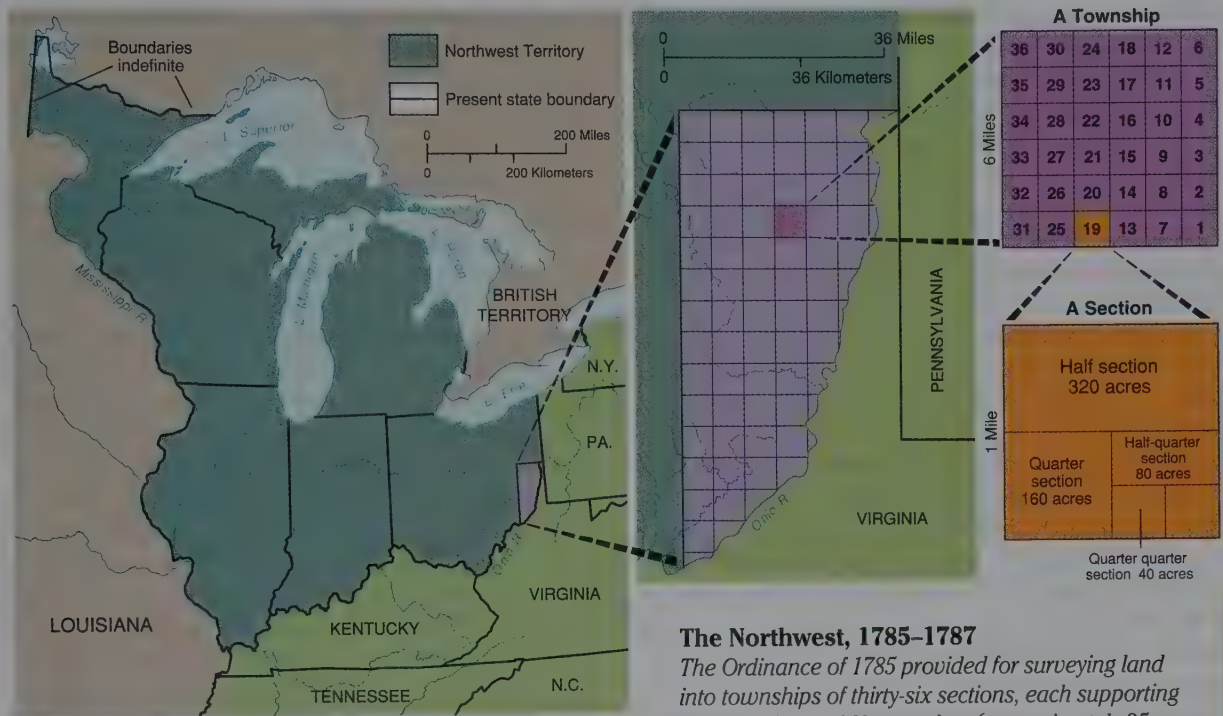
When peace came in 1783, Morris found it impossible to secure adequate funding for the United States. That year, Congress sent another tax measure to the states, but once again a single legislature, this time New York's, blocked it. From then on, the states steadily decreased their contributions to Congress. By the late 1780s, the states had fallen behind nearly 80 percent in providing the funds that Congress requested to operate the government and honor the national debt.

Nor did the Confederation succeed in prying trade concessions from Britain. Before independence, almost 60 percent of northern exports had gone to the West Indies, and New England's maritime community had employed approximately 15 percent of all adult males. After independence, however, Britain prohibited American trade with its Caribbean colonies and imposed high customs fees for landing products in Great Britain. Because half of all American exports went to Great Britain and its colonies, these restrictions allowed British shippers to increase their share of Atlantic trade at American expense.

The decline in trade with Britain contributed substantially to an economic depression that gripped parts of the nation beginning in 1784. New Englanders were the least fortunate. A short growing season and poor soil kept yields so low, even in the best of times, that farmers barely produced enough grain for local consumption. New Englanders also faced both high taxes to repay the money borrowed to finance the Revolution and a tightening of credit that spawned countless lawsuits against debtors. Economic depression only aggravated the region's chronic overpopulation. Young New England men continued migrating to the frontier or to the cities, and their discontent and restless mobility loosened the bonds of parental authority and left many women without marriage prospects.

British restrictions against trading with the West Indies fell especially hard on New England. Resourceful captains took cargoes to the French West Indies, Scandinavia, and even China. Some even smuggled food-





### The Northwest, 1785–1787

The Ordinance of 1785 provided for surveying land into townships of thirty-six sections, each supporting four families on 160-acre plots (approximately 25 people per square mile). In 1787 the Northwest Ordinance stipulated that states would ultimately be created in the region.

stuffs to the British West Indies under the very nose of the Royal Navy. Nevertheless, by 1791 discriminatory British treatment had reduced the number of seamen in the Massachusetts cod and whale fisheries by 42 percent compared to the 1770s.

The mid-Atlantic states, on the other hand, were less dependent on British-controlled markets for their exports. As famine stalked Europe, farmers in Pennsylvania and New York prospered from climbing export prices—much as Thomas Paine had predicted (see Chapter 5). By 1788 the region had largely recovered from the Revolution's ravages.

Southern planters faced frustration at the failure of their principal crops, tobacco and rice, to return to pre-war export levels. Whereas nearly two-thirds of the mainland colonies' exports originated in the South in 1770, less than half the new nation's exports were produced by southern states in 1790. In an effort to stay afloat, many Chesapeake tobacco growers shifted to wheat, and others expanded their production of hemp. But these changes had little effect on the region as a whole. The South's failure to recover its export base, along with barriers to westward expansion, contributed to nagging uncertainties about its future.

### The Confederation and the West

Another formidable challenge confronting the Confederation was the postwar settlement and administration of western lands. Settlers and speculators were determined to possess these lands, and Native Americans were just as determined to keep them out. At the same time, Britain and Spain sought to contain the new nation's territorial expansion.

After the states surrendered claims to more than 160 million acres north of the Ohio River, Congress established uniform procedures for surveying this land in the Ordinance of 1785. The law established as the basic unit of settlement a township six miles square. Every township would be subdivided into thirty-six sections of 640 acres each, one of which would be reserved as a source of income for schools. Subsequently, in the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, Congress

defined the steps for the creation and admission of new states. This law designated the area north of the Ohio River as the Northwest Territory and provided for its later division into states. It forbade slavery while the region remained a territory, although the citizens could legalize the institution after statehood (as Illinois almost did in 1824).

The Northwest Ordinance outlined three stages for admitting states into the Union. First, during the initial years of settlement, Congress would appoint a territorial governor and judges. Second, as soon as five thousand adult males lived in a territory, voters would approve a temporary constitution and elect a legislature that would pass the territory's laws. Third, when the total population reached sixty thousand, voters would ratify a state constitution, which Congress would have to approve before granting statehood.

The Ordinance of 1785 and the Northwest Ordinance became the Confederation's major contributions to American life. These laws set the basic principles for surveying the frontier, allowed territorial government at an early stage of settlement, and provided reasonable standards for obtaining statehood. Both measures served as models for organizing territories later acquired west of the Mississippi River. The Northwest Ordinance also established a significant precedent for banning slavery from certain territories. But because Indians, determined to keep out Confederation immigrants, controlled virtually the entire region north of the Ohio River, the Confederation's ordinances respecting the Northwest had no immediate effect.

The Northwest Territory seemed to offer enough rich land to guarantee future citizens landownership for centuries. This fact satisfied American republicans who feared that the rapidly growing white population would quickly exhaust available land east of the Appalachians and so create a large class of tenants and poor laborers who would lack the property needed to vote. By poisoning politics through class conflict, such a development would undermine the equality that republicans thought essential for a healthy nation.

The realization of these republican dreams was by no means inevitable. Most "available" territory from the Appalachians to the Mississippi River belonged to those peoples whom the Declaration of Independence had condemned as "merciless Indian savages." Divided into more than eighty tribes and numbering perhaps 150,000 people in 1789, these Native Americans were struggling to preserve their way of life. At post-

war treaty negotiations, they repeatedly heard federal commissioners scornfully declare, "You are a subdued people . . . we claim the country by conquest." Under threats of continued warfare, some Indian leaders initially gave in. The Iroquois, who had suffered heavily during the war, lost about half their land in New York and Pennsylvania in the second Treaty of Fort Stanwix (1784). In the treaties of Fort McIntosh (1785) and Fort Finney (1786), the Delawares and Shawnees, respectively, were obliged to recognize American sovereignty over their lands. But most Indians reacted with outrage and repudiated these treaties on the grounds that their negotiators lacked the authority to give up their nations' lands.

The Indians' resistance to Confederation encroachments also stemmed from their confidence that the British—still a presence in the West—would provide the arms and ammunition they needed to defy the Confederation. Britain had refused to abandon seven forts on the new nation's northwestern frontier, citing certain states' failure to compensate loyalists for confiscated property and to honor prewar debts owed by citizens. But well before Britain knew about the violation of these provisions of the peace treaty, its colonial office had secretly ordered the governor of Canada to hold those forts. With Indian support, Britain hoped eventually to reestablish its claim to the Northwest Territory. Meanwhile, the lingering British presence in the Northwest allowed Canadian fur traders to maintain a brisk business there.

The Mohawk Joseph Brant emerged as the initial inspiration behind Indian resistance in the Northwest. Courageous in battle, skillful in diplomacy, and highly educated (he had translated an Anglican prayer book and the Gospel of Mark into Mohawk), Brant became a minor celebrity when he visited King George at London in 1785. At British-held Fort Detroit in 1786, he helped organize the northwestern Indians into a military alliance to exclude Confederation citizens north of the Ohio River. But Brant and his Mohawks, who had relocated beyond American reach in Canada, could not win support from Senecas and other Iroquois who had chosen to remain in New York, where they now lived in peace with their white neighbors.

Seizing on disunity within Indian ranks, Kentuckians and others organized militia raids into the Northwest Territory. These raids gradually forced the Miamis, Shawnees, and Delawares to evacuate southern Indiana and Ohio. The Indians' withdrawal northward, to-



ward the Great Lakes, tempted whites to make their first settlements in what is now Ohio. In the spring of 1788, about fifty New Englanders sailed down the Ohio River in a bullet-proof barge named the *Mayflower* and founded the town of Marietta. That same year, some Pennsylvanians and New Jerseyites established a second community north of the Ohio, on the site of modern-day Cincinnati. By then the contest for the Ohio Valley was nearing a decisive stage.

The Confederation confronted similar problems in the Southeast, where Spain and its Indian allies took steps to prevent American settlers from advancing on their lands. The Spanish found a brilliant ally in the Creek leader Alexander McGillivray. In a series of fraudulent treaties, two Creeks had surrendered extensive territory to Georgia that McGillivray intended to re-

gain. Patiently holding back his followers for three years, McGillivray negotiated a secret treaty with Spain that promised the Creeks weapons so that they could protect themselves “from the Bears and other fierce Animals.” When the Creeks finally attacked in 1786, they assaulted only occupants on the disputed lands and shrewdly offered Georgia a cease-fire after winning their objective. Eager to avoid voting taxes for a costly war, Georgia politicians let the Creeks keep the land.

Spain also sought to prevent American infiltration by denying western settlers permission to ship their crops down the Mississippi River to New Orleans. Having negotiated a separate treaty with Britain (see above), Spain had not signed the Peace of Paris, by which Britain promised the United States export rights down the Mississippi, and in 1784 the Spanish closed New Orleans to Anglo-American commerce. To negotiate trading privileges at New Orleans, the United States sent John Jay to Spain. Jay returned in 1786 with a treaty that opened up valuable Spanish markets to eastern merchants and renounced Spanish claims to disputed southwestern lands—at the cost, however, of relinquishing American export rights through New Orleans for twenty years. Westerners and southerners charged that this Jay-Gardoqui Treaty sacrificed their interests to benefit northern commerce, and Congress rejected it.

### *Shays's Rebellion*

Without an outbreak of violence in Massachusetts late in 1786, the Confederation might have tottered on indefinitely. The depression that had begun in 1784 struck especially hard in Massachusetts after the state lost its best market, the British West Indies. To worsen matters, the state legislature voted early in 1786 to pay off its Revolutionary debt in three years. This ill-considered policy necessitated a huge tax hike. Meanwhile, the state's unfavorable balance of payments with Britain had produced a shortage of specie (gold and silver coin) because British creditors refused any other currency. Fearing a flood of worthless paper notes, Massachusetts bankers and merchants insisted that they, too, be paid in specie, while the state mandated the same for payment of taxes. At the bottom of this cycle of debt were thousands of small family farmers who rarely handled hard currency. As with small farmers throughout America, those in Massachusetts were accustomed to

**Joseph Brant**, by Wilhelm von Moll Berczy, c. 1800  
*In the 1780s several Indian leaders—among them Brant (a Mohawk), Blue Jacket (a Shawnee), and Little Turtle (a Miami)—worked to create a northwestern Indian confederation that would strengthen Native American resolve not to bargain with land-hungry whites.*



paying each other and local creditors in goods such as grain and wool and sometimes with a service such as shoeing a horse or helping to build a barn. Creditors allowed debts from local customers to run for months and years at a time. The notion of immediately paying all debts and taxes owed in hard currency was not only alien to but impossible for many.

The plight of Massachusetts farmers was especially severe in the western counties, where agriculture was least profitable. Farmers held public meetings, as they had more than a decade earlier, to discuss “the Suppressing of tyrannical government.” This time, however, they meant the Massachusetts government rather than the British. Late in 1786 farmer and former Revolutionary War officer Daniel Shays led some two thousand angry men in an attempt to shut down the courts in three of these western counties, and thereby stop sheriffs’ auctions for unpaid taxes and prevent foreclosures on farm mortgages. Although routed by state troops after several skirmishes, sympathizers of Shays won control of the Massachusetts legislature in 1787, cut taxes, and secured a pardon for their leader.

Shays’s supporters had limited objectives, were dispersed with relatively little bloodshed, and never seriously posed the danger of anarchy. But his uprising, and similar but less militant movements in other states, symbolized for many the republic’s fragility under the Confederation. By threatening to seize weapons from a federal arsenal at Springfield, Massachusetts, the Shaysites unintentionally enabled nationalists to argue that the United States had become vulnerable to “mobocracy.” At the same time, rumors were flying that the Spanish had offered export rights at New Orleans to westerners if they would secede from the Union. Nationalists sowed fears that the United States was on the verge of coming apart.

Not everyone shared these apprehensions. In contrast to New England, the mid-Atlantic and southern states were emerging from the depression, thanks to rising tobacco and food exports to Europe. Taxpayers in these sections, moreover, were paying off war debts easily. Furthermore, the regions’ numerous small farming families, living in relatively isolated communities and trading largely with neighbors, were in quiet times widely indifferent to national politics. But the minority of people intensely dissatisfied with the Confederation was growing. Urban artisans, for example, hoped for a stronger national government that would impose a uniformly high tariff and thereby protect them from

foreign competition. Merchants and shippers wanted a government powerful enough to secure trading privileges for them, and land speculators and western settlers preferred a government capable of pursuing a more activist policy against the Indians. To these groups were now added economic and political elites who saw in Shays’s Rebellion a sign of worse things to come.

Shortly before the outbreak of the rebellion, delegates from five states had assembled at Annapolis, Maryland. They had intended to discuss means of promoting interstate commerce but instead called for a general convention to propose amendments to the Articles of Confederation. Accepting their suggestion, Congress asked the states to appoint delegations to meet in Philadelphia.

### *The Philadelphia Convention*

In May 1787 fifty-five delegates from every state but Rhode Island began gathering at the Pennsylvania State House in Philadelphia, later known as Independence Hall. Among them were established figures like George Washington and Benjamin Franklin, as well as talented newcomers such as Alexander Hamilton and James Madison. Most were wealthy and in their thirties or forties, and nineteen owned slaves. More than half had legal training.

The convention immediately closed its sessions to the press and the public, kept no *official* journal, and even appointed chaperones to accompany the aged and talkative Franklin to dinner parties lest he disclose details of what was happening. Although these measures opened the members of the convention to the charge of acting undemocratically and conspiratorially, the delegates thought secrecy essential to ensure themselves freedom of debate without fear of criticism from home.

The delegates shared a “continental” or “nationalist” perspective, instilled through their extended involvement with the national government. Thirty-nine had sat in Congress, where they had seen the Articles’ defects firsthand. In the postwar years, they had become convinced that unless the national government were freed from the state legislatures’ control, the country would fall victim to foreign aggression or simply disintegrate.

The convention faced two basic issues. The first was whether to tinker with the Articles, as the state leg-



## The Assembly Room in Independence Hall

*Much history was made in this room. The Declaration of Independence was signed here in 1776, and the constitutional convention delegates met in this chamber in 1787.*



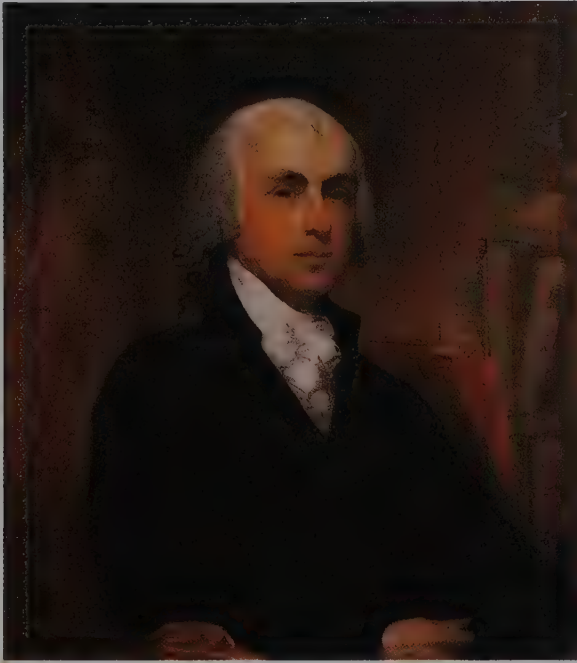
islatures had formally instructed the delegates to do, or to scrap the Articles and draw up an entirely new frame of government. The second fundamental question was how to balance the conflicting interests of large and small states. James Madison of Virginia, who had entered Congress in 1780 at twenty-nine, proposed an answer to each issue. Despite his youth and almost frail build, Madison commanded enormous respect for his profound knowledge of history and the passionate intensity that he brought to debates.

Madison's Virginia Plan, introduced in late May, boldly called for the establishment of a national government rather than a federation of states. Madison's blueprint gave Congress virtually unrestricted rights of legislation and taxation, the power to veto any state law, and authority to use military force against the states. As one delegate immediately saw, the Virginia Plan was designed "to abolish the State Govern[men]ts altogether." The Virginia Plan specified a bicameral legislature and fixed representation in both houses of Congress proportionally to each state's population. The voters would elect the lower house, which would then choose delegates to the upper chamber from nominations submitted by the legislatures. Both houses would jointly name the country's president and judges.

Madison's scheme aroused immediate opposition, however, especially his call for state representation according to population—a provision highly favorable to his own Virginia. On June 15 William Paterson of New Jersey offered a counterproposal, the so-called New Jersey Plan, which recommended a single-chamber congress in which each state had an equal vote, just as under the Articles.

Despite their differences over representation, Paterson's and Madison's proposals alike would have strengthened the national government at the states' expense. No less than Madison, Paterson wished to empower Congress to raise taxes, regulate interstate commerce, and use military force against the states. The New Jersey Plan, in fact, was the first to define congressional laws and treaties as the "supreme law of the land"; it would also have established courts to force reluctant states to accept these measures.

The two plans exposed the convention's great stumbling block: the question of representation. The Virginia Plan would have given the four largest states a majority in both houses. The New Jersey Plan would have allowed the seven smallest states, which included just 25 percent of all Americans, to control Congress. By July 2 the convention had arrived "at a full stop," as one delegate put it. To end the impasse, the delegates as-

**James Madison**

*Although one of the Philadelphia Convention's youngest delegates, Madison of Virginia was among its most politically astute. He played a central role in the Constitution's adoption.*

signed a member from each state to a “grand committee” dedicated to compromise. The panel adopted a proposal offered earlier by the Connecticut delegation: an equal vote for each state in the upper house and proportional voting in the lower house. Madison and the Virginians doggedly fought this so-called Connecticut Compromise, but they were voted down on July 17. The convention overcame the remaining hurdles rather easily in the next two months.

As finally approved on September 17, 1787, the Constitution of the United States was an extraordinary document, and not merely because it reconciled the conflicting interests of the large and small states. Out of hard bargaining among different states’ representatives emerged the Constitution’s delicate balance between the desire of nearly all delegates for a stronger national government and their fear that governments tended to grow despotic. The Constitution augmented national authority in several ways. Although it did not incorporate Madison’s proposal to give Congress a veto over state laws, it vested in Congress the authority to lay and

collect taxes, to regulate interstate commerce, and to conduct diplomacy. States could no longer coin money, interfere with contracts and debts, or tax interstate commerce. All acts and treaties of the United States became “the supreme law of the land.” All state officials had to swear to uphold the Constitution, even against acts of their own states. The national government could use military force against any state.

These provisions added up to a complete abandonment of the principle on which the Articles of Confederation had rested: that the United States was a federation of independent republics known as states, with all authority concentrated in their legislatures. Yet still concerned about too centralized a federal system, the Constitution’s framers devised two ways to restrain the power of the new central government. First, they established three distinct branches—executive, legislative, and judicial—within the national government; and second, they designed a system of checks and balances to prevent any one branch from dominating the other two. The framers systematically applied to the national government the principle of a *functional* separation of powers, an idea that had been evolving in the states since about 1780. In the bicameral Congress, states’ equal representation in the Senate was offset by the proportional representation, by population, in the House; and each chamber could block hasty measures demanded by the other. Furthermore, where the state constitutions had deliberately weakened the executive, the Constitution gave the president the power to veto acts of Congress; but to prevent capricious use of the veto, Congress could override the president by a two-thirds majority in each house. The president could conduct diplomacy, but only the Senate could ratify treaties. The president named his cabinet, but only with Senate approval. The president and all his appointees could be removed from office by a joint vote of Congress, but only for “high crimes,” not for political disagreements.

To further ensure the independence of each branch, the Constitution provided that the members of one branch would not choose those of another, except for judges, whose independence was protected by lifetime appointment. For example, the president was to be selected by an electoral college, whose members the states would select as their legislatures saw fit. The state legislatures also elected the members of the Senate, whereas the election of delegates to the House of Representatives was achieved by direct popular vote.



In addition to checks and balances, the founders improvised a novel form of federalism—that being a system of shared power and dual lawmaking by the national and state governments—in order to place limits on central authority. Not only did the state legislatures have a key role in electing the president and senators, but the Constitution could be amended by the votes of three-fourths of the state legislatures. Thus, the convention devised a form of government that differed significantly from Madison's plan to establish a "consolidated" national government entirely independent of, and superior to, the states.

A key assumption behind federalism was that the national government would limit its activities to foreign affairs, national defense, regulating interstate commerce, and coining money. Most other political matters were left to the states. Regarding slavery in particular, each state retained full authority.

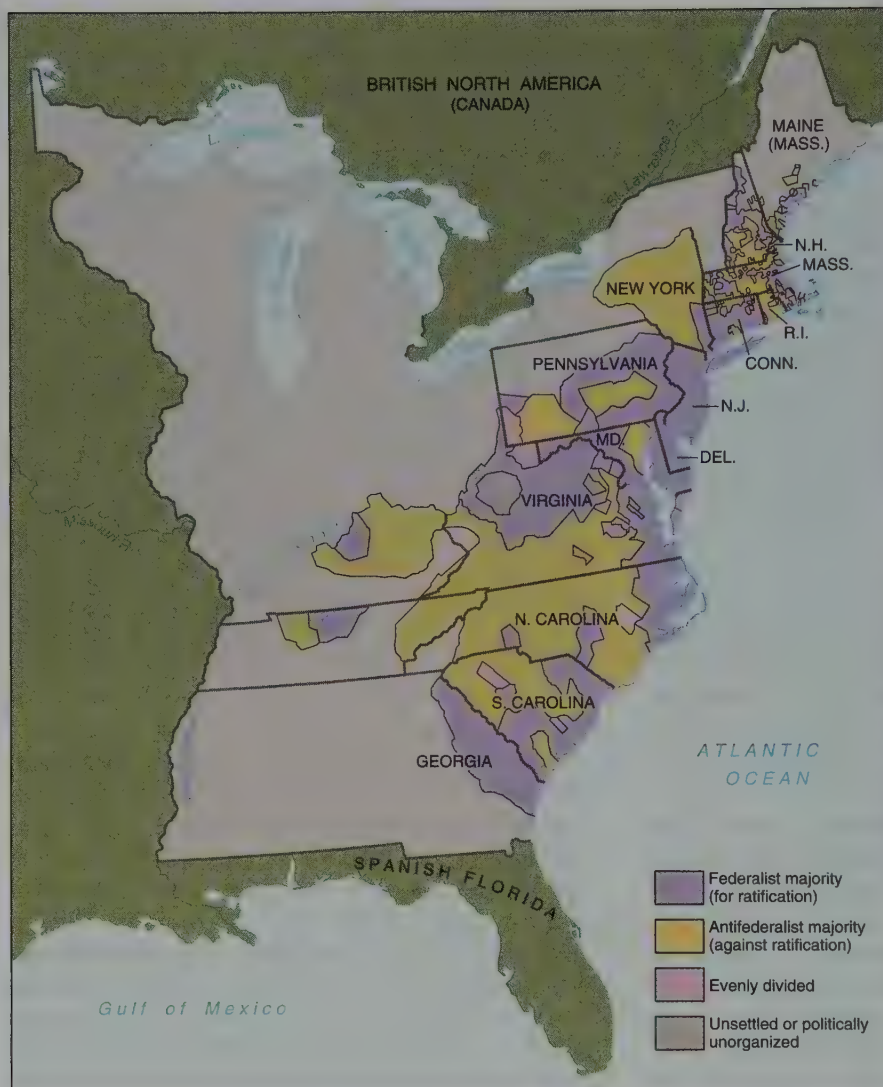
The dilemma confronting the Philadelphia Convention centered not on whether slavery should be allowed in the new republic but rather on the much narrower question of whether slaves could be counted as persons when it came to determining a state's representation at the national level. For most legal purposes, slaves were regarded not as persons but rather as the *chattel* property of their owners, meaning that they were on a par with other living property such as horses and cattle. But southern states saw their large numbers of slaves as a means of augmenting their numbers in the House of Representatives and in the electoral colleges that would elect the nation's presidents every four years. So strengthened, they could prevent northerners from ever abolishing slavery. Representing states that were abolishing slavery, northern delegates hesitated to give southern states a political advantage by allowing them to count people who had no civil or political rights. But as property owners themselves, northern delegates were also hesitant to question southern planters' notions of property rights, no matter what form the property took. Southerners also played on northern fears of disunion. After Georgia and South Carolina threatened to secede if their demands were not met, northerners agreed to allow three-fifths of all slaves to be counted for congressional representation. The Constitution also forbade any state's people to prevent the return of runaway slaves to another state. The Constitution limited slavery only to the extent of permitting Congress to ban the importation of slaves after 1808, and by not repu-

diating Congress's earlier ban on slavery in the Northwest Territory.

Although leaving much authority to the states, the Constitution established a national government clearly superior to the states in several spheres, and it utterly abandoned the notion of a federation of virtually independent states. Having thus strengthened national authority, the convention had to face the issue of ratification. For two reasons, it seemed unwise to submit the Constitution to state legislatures for ratification. First, the framers realized that the state legislatures would reject the Constitution, which shrank their power relative to the national government. Second, most of the framers repudiated the idea—implicit in ratification by existing state legislatures—that the states were the foundation of the new government. The opening words of the Constitution—"We the People of the United States"—underlined the delegates' growing conviction that the government had to be based on the consent of the American people themselves, "the fountain of all power" in Madison's words.

In the end, the Philadelphia Convention provided for the Constitution's ratification by special state conventions composed of delegates elected by the people. Approval by only nine such conventions would put the new government in operation. Because any state refusing to ratify the Constitution would remain under the Articles, the possibility existed that the country might divide into two nations.

Under the Constitution the framers expected the nation's "natural aristocracy" to continue exercising political leadership; but did they also intend to rein in the democratic currents set in motion by the Revolution? In one respect they did, by curtailing what most nationalists considered the excessive power of popularly elected legislatures. But the Constitution made no attempt to control faction and disorder by suppressing liberty—a "remedy," wrote Madison, that would be "worse than the disease." The framers did provide for one crucial democratic element in the new government, the House of Representatives. Equally important, the Constitution recognized the American people as the ultimate source of political legitimacy. Moreover, by making the Constitution flexible and amendable (though not easily amendable) and by dividing political power among competing branches of government, the framers made it possible for the national government to be slowly democratized in ways unforeseen in 1787, without turning into a tyranny of ideologues or tempo-



### Federalist and Antifederalist Strongholds, 1787–1790

Federalists drew their primary backing from densely populated areas along major transportation routes, where trade, mobility, and frequent contact with people in other states encouraged a nationalistic identity. Antifederalist support came from interior regions where geographic isolation bred a localistic perspective. However, some frontier regions, among them Georgia and western Virginia, voted for a strong central government that would push back the Indians or the Spanish.

rary majorities. Madison eloquently expressed the founders' intention of controlling the dangers inherent in any society:

If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: You must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place, oblige it to control itself. A dependence on the people is no doubt the primary control on the government; but experience has taught mankind the necessity of external precautions.

### The Struggle Over Ratification

The Constitution's supporters began the campaign for ratification without significant national support. Most Americans had expected that the Philadelphia Convention would offer only limited amendments to the Articles. A majority therefore hesitated to adopt the radical restructuring of government that had been proposed. Undaunted, the Constitution's friends moved decisively to marshal political support. In a clever stroke, they called themselves Federalists, a term that implied that the Constitution balanced the relationship between the national and state governments and thereby lessened



the opposition of those hostile to a centralization of national authority.

The Constitution's opponents commonly became known as Antifederalists. This negative-sounding title probably hurt them, for it did not convey the crux of their argument against the Constitution—that it was not “federalist” at all since it failed to balance the power of the national and state governments. By augmenting national authority, Antifederalists maintained, the Constitution would ultimately doom the states.

The Antifederalist arguments reflected a deep-seated Anglo-American suspicion of concentrated power, expressed from the time of the Stamp Act crisis (see Chapter 5) through the War of Independence and during the framing of the first state constitutions and the Articles of Confederation. Unquestionably, the Constitution gave the national government unprecedented authority in an age when almost all writers on politics taught that the sole means of preventing despotism was to restrain the power of government officials. Compared to a distant national government, state governments struck Antifederalists as far more responsive to the popular will. True, the framers had devised a system of checks and balances to guard against tyranny, but no one could be certain that the untried scheme would work. To Mercy Otis Warren, the proposed government was “of such motley mixture that its enemies cannot trace a feature of Democratick or Republican extract,” and one that would “have passed through the short period of its existence without a name, had not Mr. [James] Wilson . . . suggested the happy epithet of a *Federal Republic*.” For all its checks and balances, in addition, the Constitution nowhere contained ironclad guarantees that the new government would protect the liberties of individuals or the states. The absence of a bill of rights made an Antifederalist of Madison's nationalist ally and fellow Virginian, George Mason, the author of the first such state bill in 1776.

Although the Antifederalists advanced some formidable arguments, they confronted a number of disadvantages in publicizing their cause. While Antifederalist ranks included prominent figures, among them Patrick Henry, Richard Henry Lee, and Mercy Otis Warren, the Federalists claimed most of the country's wealthiest and most honored men. And no Antifederalist had the stature of George Washington or Benjamin Franklin. Moreover, most American newspapers were pro-Constitution and did not hesitate to bias their reporting in favor of the Federalist cause. Finally, as state and local

leaders, the Antifederalists lacked their opponents' contacts and experience at the national level, acquired through service in the officer corps of the Continental Army or in Congress.

The Federalists' advantages in funds and political organizing proved decisive. The Antifederalists failed to create a sense of urgency among their supporters, assuming incorrectly that a large majority would rally to them. Only one-quarter of the voters turned out to elect delegates to the state ratifying conventions, however, and most had been mobilized by Federalists.

Federalist delegates prevailed in eight conventions between December 1787 and May 1788, in all cases except one by margins of at least two-thirds. Such lopsided votes reflected the Federalists' organizational skills and aggressiveness rather than the degree of popular support for the Constitution. Advocates of the new plan of government did indeed ram through approval in some states “before it can be digested or deliberately considered,” in the words of a Pennsylvania Antifederalist. Only Rhode Island and North Carolina rejected the Constitution and thus refused to join the new United States.

But unless Virginia and New York ratified, the new government would not be workable. In both states (and elsewhere) Antifederalist sentiment ran high among small farmers, who saw the Constitution as a scheme favoring city dwellers and monied interests. Prominent political leaders in these two states called for refusing ratification, including New York governor George Clinton and Virginia's Richard Henry Lee, George Mason, Patrick Henry, and future president James Monroe.

The Constitution became the law of the land on June 21, 1788, when the ninth state, New Hampshire, ratified by the close vote of 57–47. At that moment debate was still under way in the Virginia convention. The Federalists won crucial support from the representatives of the Allegheny counties—modern West Virginia—who wanted a strong national government capable of ending Indian raids across the Ohio River. Western Virginians' votes, combined with James Madison's logic and the growing support for the Constitution among tidewater planters, proved too much for Henry's spellbinding oratory. On June 25 the Virginia delegates ratified by a narrow 53 percent majority.

The struggle was even closer and more hotly contested in New York. Antifederalists had solid control of the state convention and would probably have voted

down the Constitution, but then news arrived of New Hampshire's and Virginia's ratification. The Federalist forces, led by Alexander Hamilton and John Jay, began hinting strongly that if the convention voted to reject, pro-Federalist New York City would secede from the state and join the Union alone, leaving upstate New York a landlocked enclave. When a number of Antifederalist delegates took alarm at this threat and switched sides, New York ratified on July 26, by a 30–27 vote.

So the Antifederalists went down in defeat, and they did not survive as a political movement. Yet they left an important legacy. At their insistence, the Virginia, New York, and Massachusetts conventions ratified the Constitution with the accompanying request that the new charter be amended to include a bill of rights protecting Americans' basic freedoms. So widespread was the public demand for a bill of rights that it became an inevitable item on the new government's agenda, even as the states were choosing members of Congress and as presidential electors were unanimously designating George Washington president of the United States.

Antifederalists' objections in New York also stimulated a response in the form of one of the great classics of political thought: *The Federalist*, a series of eighty-five newspaper essays penned by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay. *The Federalist* papers probably had little or no influence on the voting in the New York State convention. Rather, their importance lay in providing a glimpse of the framers' intentions in designing the Constitution, and thus powerfully shaping the American philosophy of government. The Constitution, insisted *The Federalist's* authors, had a twofold purpose: first, to defend the minority's rights against majority tyranny; and second, to prevent a stubborn minority from blocking well-considered measures that the majority believed necessary for the national interest. Critics, argued *The Federalist*, had no reason to fear that the Constitution would allow a single economic or regional interest to dominate. In the most profound essay in the series, *Federalist* No. 10, Madison rejected the Antifederalist argument that establishing a republic for a nation as large as the United States would unleash a chaotic contest for power and ultimately leave the majority exploited by a minority. "Extend the sphere," Madison insisted, "and . . . you make it less probable that a majority of the whole will have a common motive to invade the rights of other citizens, . . . [or will be able to] act in unison with each other." The country's very size and diversity would

neutralize the attempts of factions to push unwise laws through Congress.

Madison's analysis was far too optimistic, however. As the Antifederalists predicted, the Constitution afforded enormous scope for special interests to influence the government. The great challenge for Madison's generation would be how to maintain a government that would provide equal benefits to all but at the same time accord special privileges to none.

## CONCLUSION

The entry of North Carolina into the Union in late 1789 and of Rhode Island in May 1790 marked the final triumph of the uncertain nationalism born of the War for Independence. The devastating eight-year conflict swept up half of all men of military age and made casualties of one-fifth of these. Among whites, blacks, and Native Americans alike, the conflict was a civil war as well as a war for American independence from Great Britain. The fighting also affected large numbers of civilians because it took place in America's cities, towns, and countryside, and because troops needed provisions and other forms of local support. Never before had so many Americans participated together in an event of such magnitude.

Fueled by ideals of liberty and equality and by their suffering and sacrificing on behalf of American independence, most Americans recognized the democratic aspirations that the conflict had unleashed. For many these aspirations were intrinsic to the new nation's identity, to what made it distinct from the other nations of the world. For such people, democracy would be achieved by maximizing the power of the white male electorate in choosing officeholders and making and enforcing laws, and by decentralizing power and authority. But for others, America's democratic tendencies needed to be held firmly in check by vesting most power in the hands of men of property and virtue. The conflict between these competing visions was played out in the protracted debates over several state constitutions and, most decisively, in the efforts to frame and ratify the new federal Constitution. By itself the Constitution did not make America a democracy; rather it created the legal and institutional framework within which Americans could struggle to attain democracy. In that way its conception was a fundamental moment in the history of America's enduring vision.



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**FOR FURTHER READING**

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- Colin G. Calloway, *The American Revolution in Indian Country: Crisis and Diversity in Native American Communities* (1995). A powerful study of eight distinct societies, from Canada to Florida, that demonstrates the variety of Indian experiences during and immediately after the Revolution.
- Edward Countryman, *The American Revolution* (1985). An excellent introduction to developments from the 1760s through ratification of the Constitution.
- Sylvia R. Frey, *Water from the Rock: Black Resistance in a Revolutionary Age* (1991). A major study of southern African Americans during and after the Revolution.
- Linda K. Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (1980). A major study of women

and of ideologies of gender during the Revolutionary and early republican eras.

- Robert Middlekauff, *The Glorious Cause: The American Revolution, 1763–1789* (1982). A narrative of military and political developments through the ratification of the Constitution.
- Jack N. Rakove, *Original Meanings: Politics and Ideas in the Making of the Constitution* (1996). A thorough study of the Constitution's framing, rooted in historical context.
- Charles Royster, *A Revolutionary People at War: The Continental Army and American Character* (1980). An illuminating analysis of how Revolutionary Americans created and fought in an army.
- Gordon S. Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (1991). A sweeping interpretation of the Revolution's long-range impact on American society.

# 7

## Launching The New Republic 1789–1800

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Wife and Children of Major Marsh and Servants c. 1790





**E**arly in 1789 a mysterious stranger from New Orleans named André Fagot appeared in Nashville, Tennessee. Fagot was officially there to talk business with local merchants, but in reality he was a Spanish agent sent to exploit discontent. For years, westerners had agonized over the American government's failure to win Spanish permission for them to export crops through New Orleans (page 182), without which their settlements would never flourish. Fagot made westerners a tempting offer—unrestricted export privileges at New Orleans, which promised to ensure them prosperity. But in return, they would have to request that Spain annex Tennessee to its Louisiana colony.

Fagot found many local residents willing to discuss becoming Spanish subjects. One of his more enthusiastic contacts was a young lawyer recently arrived from the Carolinas. Aware that poor communities could support only poor lawyers, the Carolinian was drawn irresistibly to the plot. Learning that Spain would give valuable land grants in the lower Mississippi Valley to anyone who renounced U.S. citizenship, the lawyer began visiting Spanish Louisiana regularly to investigate settling there. Fagot probably placed little reliance on this brash conspirator, who had a wild temper and a reputation for gambling and drinking, and who seemed just another frontier opportunist. The obscure lawyer's name was Andrew Jackson.

The fact that a future patriot and president such as Jackson was talking secession with a Spanish agent underscores the fragility of the United States in 1789, the year of George Washington's first inauguration. North Carolina (which controlled Tennessee territory) and Rhode Island had not yet joined the Union. Thousands

of recently arrived western settlers appeared to be abandoning the new government. The United States' claims to western territories were being effectively challenged by Native Americans and their Spanish and British allies. The development of American economic power was severely limited by foreign restrictions on U.S. exports and by the government's inability to obtain credit abroad.

During the 1790s Americans fought bitterly over the social and economic course their new nation should take, and these conflicts merged with the dissension between Americans loyal to revolutionary France and those favoring its British opponents. By 1798 voters had divided into two parties, each of which accused the other of threatening republican liberty. Only when the election of 1800 had been settled—by the narrowest of margins—could it be said that the United States had managed to avoid dissolution and preserve civil liberties for those defined as citizens.

This chapter focuses on four major questions:

- ◆ How and why did the political consensus prevailing at the time of Washington's first inauguration fracture into a two-party system by 1796?
- ◆ Why was the United States at various times at odds with Spain, Britain, and France at the end of the eighteenth century?
- ◆ What principal issues divided Federalists and Republicans in the presidential election of 1800?
- ◆ What were the primary factors contributing to the declining status and welfare of nonwhites in the new republic?



### New Orleans

*The French and Spanish developed this port city during the eighteenth century. By century's end many in the United States saw New Orleans as a key to the new nation's future expansion and prosperity.*

## Constitutional Government Takes Shape

Traveling slowly over the nation's miserable roads, the men entrusted with launching the federal experiment began assembling in New York, the new national capital, in March 1789. Because so few members were on hand, Congress opened its session a month late. George Washington did not arrive until April 23 and only took his oath of office a week later.

The slowness of these first halting steps disguised the seriousness of the tasks at hand. The country's elected leaders had to make far-reaching decisions on several critical questions left unresolved by the Constitution's framers. For example, the Constitution gave the president no formal responsibility for preparing a legislative agenda, although it allowed him wide discretion by directing him to make periodic reports on the state of the Union and by permitting him to recommend matters for Congress's consideration. The Philadelphia Convention likewise had not specified whether cabinet officers would be accountable to Congress or to the president. Nor did the Constitution say how the federal court system should be structured. Finally, widespread distrust of any government unrestrained by a bill of rights required that Congress pre-

pare amendments for the states' consideration, but the exact scope and character of these amendments remained to be determined. "We are in a wilderness," wrote James Madison, "without a footstep to guide us."

### Defining the Presidency

No office in the new government aroused more suspicion than the presidency. Many feared that the president's powers could make him a virtual king. Public apprehension remained in check only because of George Washington's reputation for honesty. Washington tried to calm fears of unlimited executive power.

The Constitution mentioned the executive departments only in passing, required the president to obtain the Senate's approval for his nominees to head these bureaus, and made all executive personnel liable to impeachment. Otherwise, Congress was free to determine the organization and accountability of what became known as the cabinet. The first cabinet, established by Congress, consisted of four departments, headed by the secretaries of state, treasury, and war and by the attorney general. Vice President John Adams's tie-breaking vote defeated a proposal that would have forbidden the president from dismissing cabinet officers without Senate approval. This outcome reinforced the president's authority to make and carry out policy; it also separated the powers of the executive and legislative branches beyond what the Constitution required, and so made the president a more equal partner with Congress.

President Washington suggested few laws to Congress. Rarely did he speak out against opponents of government policy, and generally he limited his public statements to matters of foreign relations and military affairs. He generally deferred to congressional decisions concerning domestic policy and cast only two vetoes during his eight-year tenure (1789–1797).

Washington tried to reassure the public that he was above favoritism and conflicts of interest. Accordingly, he strove to understand the aspirations of the two groups that dominated American society—northeastern merchants and entrepreneurs, and southern planters—and he balanced his cabinet between them. When Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson opposed certain policies of Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton, Washington implored Jefferson not to leave his post, even though the president supported Hamilton. Like most republican leaders, Washington believed



## CHRONOLOGY

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| <p><b>1789</b> First Congress convenes in New York.<br/>George Washington sworn in as first president.<br/>Judiciary Act of 1789.<br/>French Revolution begins.</p> <p><b>1790</b> Alexander Hamilton submits his Report on the Public Credit and Report on a National Bank to Congress.<br/>Treaty of New York.</p> <p><b>1791</b> Bank of the United States is granted a twenty-year charter.<br/>Vermont admitted to the Union.<br/>Bill of Rights ratified.<br/>Slave uprising begins in French colony of Saint Domingue.<br/>Society for the Encouragement of Useful Manufactures founded.<br/>Hamilton submits his Report on Manufactures to Congress.</p> | <p><b>1792</b> Washington reelected president.<br/>Kentucky admitted to the Union.</p> <p><b>1793</b> Fugitive Slave Law.<br/><i>Chisholm v. Georgia</i>.<br/>Large-scale exodus of French planters from Saint Domingue to the United States.<br/>France declares war on Britain and Spain.<br/>Washington's Neutrality Proclamation.<br/>Citizen Genet arrives in United States.<br/>First Democratic societies established.</p> <p><b>1794</b> Whiskey Rebellion in western Pennsylvania.<br/>General Anthony Wayne's forces rout Indians in the Battle of Fallen Timbers.</p> <p><b>1795</b> Treaty of Greenville.<br/>Jay's Treaty with Britain ratified.</p> | <p><b>1796</b> <i>Hylton v. United States</i>.<br/><i>Ware v. Hylton</i>.<br/>Tennessee admitted to the Union.<br/>Treaty of San Lorenzo (Pinckney's Treaty) ratified.<br/>Washington's Farewell Address.<br/>John Adams elected president.</p> <p><b>1798</b> XYZ Affair.<br/>Alien and Sedition Acts.<br/>Eleventh Amendment to the Constitution ratified.</p> <p><b>1798–1799</b> Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions.</p> <p><b>1798–1800</b> United States fights Quasi-War with France.</p> <p><b>1799</b> Fries Rebellion in Pennsylvania.</p> <p><b>1800</b> Gabriel's Rebellion in Virginia.<br/>Thomas Jefferson elected president.</p> |
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that the proper role for ordinary citizens was not to set policy through elections but rather to choose well-educated, politically sophisticated men who would make laws in the people's best interest, though independently of direct popular influence.

The president endured rather than enjoyed the pomp of office. Suffering from a variety of ailments that grew as the years passed, Washington longed to escape the presidency and Philadelphia (the nation's capital from 1790 to 1800). Only with difficulty was he persuaded to accept reelection in 1792. He dreaded dying while in office and thus setting the precedent for a lifetime presidency. With great anxiety he realized that "the preservation of the sacred fire of liberty and the destiny of the republican model of government are . . . deeply, perhaps *finally*, staked on the experiment entrusted to the hands of the American people." Should he contribute to that experiment's failure, he feared, his name would live only as an "awful monument."

### *National Justice and the Bill of Rights*

The Constitution merely authorized Congress to establish federal courts below the level of the Supreme Court; it offered no guidance as to how the judicial system should be structured. And although the Constitution specifically barred the federal government from committing such abuses as passing *ex post facto* laws\* and bills of attainder,<sup>†</sup> the absence of a comprehensive bill of rights had led several delegates at Philadelphia to refuse to sign the Constitution and had been a major point of attack by Antifederalists. The task of filling in these gaps fell to the First Congress.

\* *Ex post facto* law: a law criminalizing previously legal actions and punishing those who have been engaging in such actions.

<sup>†</sup> Bill of attainder: a legislative act proclaiming a person's guilt and stipulating punishment without a judicial trial.

In 1789 many citizens feared that the new federal courts would ride roughshod over local customs. Every state had gradually devised a unique, time-honored blend of judicial procedures appropriate to local circumstances. Any attempt to force states to abandon their legal heritages would have produced strong counterdemands that federal justice be narrowly restricted.

In passing the Judiciary Act of 1789, Congress managed to quiet popular apprehensions by establishing in each state a federal district court that operated according to local procedures. As the Constitution stipulated, the Supreme Court exercised final jurisdiction. Congress had struck a reasonable compromise that respected state traditions while offering wide access to federal justice.

Behind the movement for a bill of rights lay Americans' long-standing fear that a strong central government would lead to tyranny. Many Antifederalists believed that the best defense against tyranny would be to strengthen the powers of state governments at the expense of the federal government, but many more Americans wanted simply to guarantee basic personal liberties. James Madison, who had been elected to the House of Representatives, played the leading role in drafting the ten amendments that became known as the Bill of Rights when ratified by the states in December 1791.

Madison insisted that the first eight amendments guarantee personal liberties, not strip the national government of any necessary authority. The First Amendment guaranteed the most fundamental freedoms of expression—religion, speech, press, and political activity—against federal interference. The Second Amendment ensured that each state could form its own citizen militia. Like the Third Amendment, it sought to protect citizens from what eighteenth-century Britons and Americans alike considered the most sinister embodiment of tyrannical power: standing armies. The Fourth through Eighth amendments limited the police powers of the state by guaranteeing individuals' fair treatment in legal and judicial proceedings. The Ninth and Tenth amendments reserved to the people or to the states powers not allocated to the federal government under the Constitution, but Madison headed off proposals to limit federal power more explicitly. In general, the Bill of Rights imposed no serious check on the framers' nationalist objectives.

Once the Bill of Rights was in place, the federal judiciary moved decisively to establish its authority. In 1793, in *Chisholm v. Georgia*, the Supreme Court ruled

that a state could be sued in federal courts by nonresidents. In 1796 the Court declared its right to determine the constitutionality of congressional statutes in *Hylton v. United States* and to strike down state laws in *Ware v. Hylton*. But Congress decided that the Court had encroached too far on states' authority in *Chisholm*, and in 1794 it voted to overturn this decision through a constitutional amendment. Ratified in 1798, the Eleventh Amendment revised Article III, Section 2, so that private citizens could no longer use federal courts to sue another state's government in civil cases. The defeat of *Chisholm* stands as one of the handful of instances in American history whereby the Supreme Court was subsequently overruled by a constitutional amendment.

By endorsing the Eleventh Amendment, Congress expressed its recognition that federal power could threaten vital local interests. Such awareness had been growing since the early 1790s, rupturing the nationalist coalition that had written the Constitution, secured its ratification, and dominated the First Congress. The catalyst of this split was Alexander Hamilton, whose bold program raised fears that federal policies could be shaped to reward special interests.

## National Economic Policy and Its Consequences

Washington's reluctance to become involved with pending legislation and with domestic affairs enabled his energetic secretary of the treasury, Alexander Hamilton, to set many of the administration's priorities. Hamilton quickly emerged as the country's most imaginative and dynamic statesman by formulating a sweeping program for strengthening the federal government and promoting economic development.

### *Hamilton and His Objectives*

Born in the British Caribbean island of Nevis in 1755, Hamilton had sailed to New York in 1772 and entered the Continental Army in 1775. Serving four years on Washington's staff, the brilliant Hamilton gained extraordinary influence over Washington, who despite misgivings frequently supported the younger man's policies.

Hamilton formulated his financial proposals to strengthen the nation against foreign enemies and also to lessen the threat of disunion. In his mind, the most



immediate danger concerned national security: the possibility of war with Great Britain, Spain, or both. The Republic could finance a full-scale war only by borrowing heavily, but because Congress under the Articles of Confederation had failed to redeem or pay interest on the Revolutionary debt, the nation's credit had been seriously weakened abroad and at home. The country's economy also seemed unequal to fighting a major European power. Unless the United States achieved self-sufficiency in the manufacture of vital industrial products and maintained a strong merchant marine ready for combat, Hamilton reasoned, its chances of surviving a second war with Britain would be slim.

Hamilton also feared that the Union might disintegrate because of Americans' tendency to think first of their local loyalties and interests. Born outside the thirteen colonies, he felt little personal identification with his adopted state, New York, or any other American locale. Instead, his six years in the Continental Army produced a burning nationalistic faith. For him, the Constitution's adoption had been a close victory of national over state authority. Now he worried that the states might reassert power over the new government. If this happened, he doubted whether the nation could prevent ruinous trade discrimination between states, deter foreign aggression, and avoid civil war.

Both his wartime experiences and his view of human nature forged Hamilton's political beliefs. An en-

thusiastic young patriot who had fought bravely during the Revolution's darkest hours, Hamilton had, like many nationalists, come to believe that the Republic's population was incapable of displaying limitless self-sacrifice and virtue. Hamilton concluded that the federal government's survival depended on building support among politically influential citizens through a straightforward appeal to their financial interests. Private ambitions would then serve the national welfare.

Charming and brilliant, vain and handsome, a notorious womanizer, and thirsting for fame and power, Hamilton himself exemplified the worldly citizen whose fortunes he hoped to link to the Republic's future. But to his opponents, Hamilton embodied the dark forces luring the Republic to its doom—a man who, Jefferson wrote, believed in “the necessity of either force or corruption to govern men.”

### *Report on the Public Credit*

Seeking guidance on how to restore the nation's creditworthiness, in 1789 Congress directed the Treasury Department to evaluate the status of the Revolutionary debt. Hamilton seized the opportunity to devise policies that would at once strengthen the country's credit, enable it to defer paying its debt, and entice a key sector of the upper class to place their prestige and capital at its service. Congress received his Report on the Pub-

#### **New York, 1792, (Detail)**

*Merchants conduct business at the Tontine Coffee House, at the intersection of Wall and Water streets, while laborers, shopkeepers, and women fill the streets below.*



lic Credit in January 1790. The report listed \$54 million in U.S. debt: \$42 million owed to Americans, and the rest to foreigners. Hamilton estimated that on top of the national debt, the states had debts of \$25 million, an amount that included several million dollars that the United States had promised to reimburse, such as Virginia's expenses in defending settlements in the Ohio Valley.

Hamilton's first major recommendation was that the federal government support the national debt by "funding" it—that is, raising the \$54 million needed to honor the debt by selling an equal sum in new securities. Purchasers of these securities would choose from several combinations of federal "stock" and western lands. Those who wished could retain their original bonds and earn 4 percent interest. All of the options would reduce interest payments on the debt from the full 6 percent set by the Confederation Congress. Hamilton knew that creditors would not object to this reduction because their investments would now be more valuable and more secure.

Second, the report proposed that the federal government pay off the state debts remaining from the Revolution. Such obligations would be funded along with the national debt in the manner described above.

Hamilton exhorted the government to use the money earned by selling federal lands in the West to pay off the \$12 million owed to Europeans as quickly as possible. The Treasury could easily accumulate the interest owed on the remaining \$42 million by collecting customs duties on imports and excise taxes on whiskey distillers. In addition, Hamilton proposed that

money owed to American citizens should be made a permanent debt. That is, he urged that the government *not* attempt to repay the \$42 million principal but instead keep paying interest to people wishing to hold bonds as an investment. If Hamilton's recommendation were adopted, the only burden on the taxpayers would be the small annual cost of interest. It would then be possible to uphold the national credit at minimal expense, without ever having to pay off the debt itself.

Hamilton advocated a perpetual debt above all as a lasting means of uniting the economic fortunes of the nation's creditors to the United States. In an age when financial investments were notoriously risky, the federal government would protect the savings of wealthy bond holders through conservative policies but still offer an interest rate competitive with the Bank of England's. The guarantee of future interest payments would act as the explicit link uniting the interests of the moneyed class with those of the government. Few other investments would entail so little risk.

Hamilton's Report on the Public Credit provoked immediate controversy. Although no one in Congress doubted that its provisions would fully restore the country's fiscal reputation, many objected that those least deserving of reward would gain the most. The original owners of more than three-fifths of the debt certificates issued by the Continental Congress (ranging from George Washington to Revolutionary patriots of modest means) had long before sold theirs at a loss, many out of dire financial necessity. Foreseeing Hamilton's intentions, wealthy speculators had thereby accumulated large holdings at the expense of unsuspecting original owners. Now these speculators stood to reap huge gains, even collecting interest that had fallen due before they had purchased the certificates. "That the case of those who parted with their securities from necessity is a hard one, cannot be denied," Hamilton admitted. But making exceptions would be even worse.

To Hamilton's surprise, Madison—his longtime colleague and initially a supporter of the plan—emerged as one of the chief opponents of reimbursing current holders at face value. Sensing opposition to the plan in his home state of Virginia, Madison now tried but failed to obtain compensation for original owners who had sold their certificates. Congress rejected his suggestions primarily because some members feared that they would weaken the nation's credit. Hamilton's policy generated widespread resentment because it rewarded

### Continental Currency





rich profiteers while ignoring the wartime sacrifices of ordinary citizens.

Opposition to assuming the state debts also ran high. Only Massachusetts, Connecticut, and South Carolina had failed to make effective provisions for paying their creditors. Understandably, the issue stirred the fiercest indignation in the South, which except for South Carolina had extinguished 83 percent of its debt. Madison and other southerners maintained that to allow residents of the laggard states to escape heavy taxes while others had liquidated theirs at great expense was to reward irresponsibility. South Carolina became the sole southern state that supported Hamilton's policies.

Southern hostility almost defeated assumption. In the end, however, Hamilton managed to save his proposal by exploiting the strong desire among Virginians to relocate the national capital in their region. Virginians expected that moving the capital would make their state the crossroads of the country and thus help preserve its position as the nation's largest, most influential state. In return for the northern votes necessary to transfer the capital to the Potomac River, Hamilton secured enough Virginians' support to win the battle for assumption. Yet the debate over state debts alienated most southerners by confirming their suspicions that other regions monopolized the benefits of a stronger union.

Congressional enactment of the Report on the Public Credit dramatically reversed the nation's fiscal standing. Thereafter, Europeans grew so enthusiastic for U.S. bonds that by 1792 some securities were selling at 10 percent above face value.

### ***Reports on the Bank and Manufactures***

Having significantly expanded the stock of capital available for investment, Hamilton intended to direct that money toward projects that would diversify the national economy through a federally chartered bank. Accordingly, in December 1790 he presented Congress with a second message, the Report on a National Bank.

The proposed bank would raise \$10 million through a public stock offering. Private investors could purchase shares by paying for three-quarters of their value in government bonds. In this way, the bank would capture a significant portion of the recently funded debt and make it available for loans; it would also receive a substantial and steady flow of interest

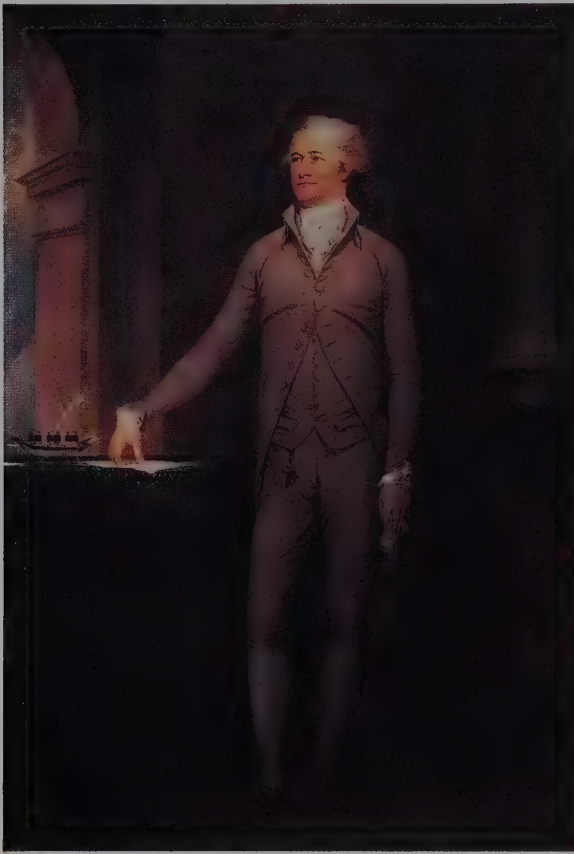
payments from the Treasury. Anyone buying shares under these circumstances had little chance of losing money and was positioned to profit handsomely.

Hamilton argued that the Bank of the United States would cost the taxpayers nothing and greatly benefit the nation. It would provide a safe place for the federal government to deposit tax revenues, make inexpensive loans to the government when taxes fell short, and help relieve the scarcity of hard cash by issuing paper notes that would circulate as money. Furthermore, it would possess authority to regulate the business practices of state banks. Above all, the bank would provide much needed credit to expand the economy.

Finally, Hamilton called for American economic self-sufficiency. He admired the "prodigious effect" on Great Britain's national wealth that the recent expansion of factories had stimulated in that nation, and he wanted to encourage similar industrialization in the United States. His December 1791 Report on Manufactures advocated protective tariffs on foreign imports to foster domestic manufacturing, which in turn would both attract immigrants and create national wealth. Elsewhere the secretary called for assisting the merchant marine against British trade restrictions by reducing duties on goods imported into the United States on American ships and by offering subsidies (called bounties) for fishermen and whalers. These measures would also indirectly protect the national bank's loans to industrialists and shippers.

Hamilton's critics denounced his proposal for a national bank, interpreting it as a dangerous scheme that would give a small, elite group special power to influence the government. These critics believed that the Bank of England had undermined the integrity of government in Britain. Shareholders of the new Bank of the United States could just as easily become the tools of unscrupulous politicians. If significant numbers in Congress owned bank stock, they would likely support the bank even at the cost of the national good. To Thomas Jefferson, the bank was "a machine for the corruption of the legislature [Congress]." Representative John Taylor of Virginia predicted that its vast wealth would enable the bank to take over the country, which would thereafter, he quipped, be known as the United States of the Bank.

Opponents also argued that the bank was unconstitutional. The Constitution gave Congress no specific authorization to issue charters of incorporation; indeed the Philadelphia Convention had rejected a proposal giving Congress just such power. Unless Congress ad-



**Alexander Hamilton**, by John Trumbull, 1792  
*Hamilton's self-confident pride clearly shines through in this portrait, painted at the height of his influence in the Washington administration.*

hered to a “strict interpretation” of the Constitution, critics argued, the central government might oppress the states and trample individual liberties, just as Parliament had done to the colonies. Strictly limiting the powers of the government seemed the surest way of preventing the United States from degenerating into a corrupt despotism.

Congress approved the bank by only a thin margin. Doubtful of the bank’s constitutionality, Washington turned for advice to both Jefferson and Hamilton. Like many southern planters, whose investments in slaves left them short of capital and often in debt, Jefferson distrusted banking. Moreover, his fear of excessively concentrated economic and political power led him to oppose extending government authority beyond the letter of the Constitution. “To take a single step beyond the boundaries thus specifically drawn around the powers

of Congress is to take possession of a boundless field of power no longer susceptible of any definition,” warned Jefferson. Hamilton fought back, urging Washington to sign the bill. Because Congress could enact all measures “necessary and proper” (Article I, Section 8), Hamilton contended that the only unconstitutional activities were those actually *forbidden* to the national government. In the end, the president accepted Hamilton’s cogent argument for a “loose interpretation” of the Constitution. In February 1791 the Bank of the United States obtained a charter guaranteeing its existence for twenty years. Washington’s acceptance of the principle of loose interpretation was an important victory for those advocating an active, assertive national government.

Madison and Jefferson also strongly opposed Hamilton’s proposal to encourage industry through protective tariffs on foreign manufactures. Representing a region that depended on planters’ ability to market their exports as cheaply as possible, they viewed tariffs as a threat to southern prosperity. They also viewed such protectionism as an unfair subsidy promoting uncompetitive industries that would founder without government support. Moreover, tariffs imposed heavy import taxes that were passed on to consumers. Together these results unjustifiably raised prices. The only beneficiaries would be those shielded from overseas competition and institutions, like the bank, that lent them money. Fearing that American cities might develop a dangerous class of dependent and politically volatile poor people, Jefferson and Madison saw industrialization as a potential menace to the Republic’s stability.

Congress ultimately refused to approve a high protective tariff. Nevertheless, Hamilton succeeded in setting higher duties on goods imported into the United States by British vessels than on items carried by American ships. As a result, the tonnage of such goods carried by the American merchant marine more than tripled from 1789 to 1793. Congress also approved subsidies for New England’s beleaguered whale and cod fisheries in 1792.

### *Hamilton’s Legacy*

Hamilton’s attempt to erect a base of political support by appealing to economic self-interest proved highly successful but also divisive. His arrangements for rescuing the nation’s credit provided enormous gains for the speculators, merchants, and other “monied men”



of the port cities who by 1790 held most of the Revolutionary debt. As holders of bank stock, these same groups had yet another reason to use their prestige on behalf of national authority. Assumption of the state debts liberated taxpayers from a crushing burden in New England, New Jersey, and South Carolina. Hamilton's efforts to promote industry, commerce, and shipping struck a responsive chord among the Northeast's budding entrepreneurs and hard-pressed artisans.

Those attracted to Hamilton's policies called themselves Federalists, in order to associate themselves with the Constitution and to imply (incorrectly) that their opponents had formerly been Antifederalists. In actuality, Federalists favored a "consolidated" (centralized) national government instead of a truly "federal" system with substantial powers left to the states. Federalists dominated public opinion in New England, New Jersey, and South Carolina and enjoyed considerable support in Pennsylvania and New York.

Hamilton's program sowed dissension in sections of the country where Federalist economic policies provided few benefits. Resentment ran high among those who felt that the government appeared to be rewarding special interests. Southern reaction to Hamilton's program, for example, was overwhelmingly negative. Outside a few urban centers, most notably Charleston, South Carolina, few southerners retained Revolutionary certificates in 1790. The Bank of the United States attracted few southern stockholders, and it allocated very little capital for loans there.

Hamilton's plans offered little to the West, where agriculture promised to be exceptionally profitable if only the right to export through New Orleans would be guaranteed. In Pennsylvania and New York, too, the uneven impact of Hamiltonian policies generated dissatisfaction. Resentment against a national economic program whose main beneficiaries seemed to be eastern "monied men" and Yankees who refused to pay their debts gradually united westerners, southerners, and many individuals in the mid-Atlantic region into a political coalition that challenged the Federalists for control of the government and called for a return to the "true principles" of republicanism.

### ***The Whiskey Rebellion***

Hamilton's financial program not only sparked an angry political debate in Congress but also helped ignite a civil insurrection called the Whiskey Rebellion. Severely testing the federal government's authority, this

insurrection was the young republic's first serious crisis.

To augment the national government's revenue from import duties, Hamilton had recommended an excise tax on domestically produced whiskey. He insisted that his proposal would distribute the expense of financing the national debt evenly across the United States. He even alleged that the country's morals would improve if higher prices induced Americans to drink less liquor, a contention enthusiastically endorsed by Philadelphia's College of Physicians. Though Congress complied with Hamilton's request in March 1791, many members doubted that Americans (who on average annually imbibed six gallons of hard liquor per adult) would submit tamely to sobriety. James Jackson of Georgia, for example, warned the administration that his constituents "have long been in the habit of getting drunk and that they will get drunk in defiance of a dozen colleges or all the excise duties which Congress might be weak or wicked enough to pass."

The accuracy of Jackson's prophecy became apparent in September 1791, when a crowd tarred and feathered an excise agent near Pittsburgh. Western Pennsylvanians found the new tax especially burdensome. Unable to ship their crops to world markets through Spanish New Orleans, most farmers had grown accustomed to distilling their rye or corn into alcohol, which could be carried across the Appalachians at a fraction of the price charged for bulky grain. Hamilton's excise equaled 25 percent of whiskey's retail value, enough to wipe out a frontier farmer's profit.

The law furthermore specified that all trials concerning tax evasion be conducted in federal courts. Any western Pennsylvanian indicted for noncompliance thus had to travel three hundred miles to Philadelphia. Not only would the accused then face a jury of unsympathetic easterners, but he would have to bear the cost of a long journey and lost earnings while at court, in addition to fines and other court penalties if found guilty. Moreover, Treasury officials rarely enforced the law rigorously outside western Pennsylvania. Consequently, western Pennsylvanians complained, local circumstances made the whiskey tax excessively burdensome.

In a scene reminiscent of colonial protests against Britain, large-scale resistance erupted in July 1794. One hundred men attacked a U.S. marshal serving sixty delinquent taxpayers with summonses to appear in court at Philadelphia. A crowd of five hundred burned the chief revenue officer's house after a shootout with federal soldiers assigned to protect him. Roving bands

torched buildings, assaulted tax collectors, chased government supporters from the region, and flew a flag symbolizing an independent country that they hoped to create from six western counties.

Echoing British denunciation of colonial protests, Hamilton blasted the rebellion as simple lawlessness, in particular because Congress had reduced the tax rate per gallon in 1792 and just recently had voted to allow state judges in western Pennsylvania to hear trials. Washington concluded that failure to respond strongly to the uprising would encourage similar outbreaks in other frontier areas where lax enforcement had allowed distillers to escape paying taxes.

Washington accordingly mustered 12,900 militiamen from Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and New Jersey to march west under his command. Opposition evaporated once the troops reached the Appalachians, and the president left Hamilton in charge of making arrests. Of about 150 suspects seized, Hamilton sent twenty in irons to Philadelphia. Two men received death sentences, but Washington eventually pardoned them both, noting that one was a “simpleton” and the other “insane.”

The Whiskey Rebellion was a milestone in determining limits on public opposition to federal policies. In the early 1790s, many Americans still assumed that it was legitimate to protest unpopular laws using the same tactics with which they had blocked parliamentary measures like the Stamp Act. Indeed, western Pennsylvanians had justified their resistance with exactly such reasoning. Before 1794 the question of how far the people might go in resisting federal laws remained unresolved because, as Washington declared, “We had given no testimony to the world of being able or willing to support our government and laws.” But by firmly suppressing the first major challenge to national authority, Washington served notice that if citizens wished to change the law, they could do so only through constitutional procedures—by making their dissatisfaction known to their elected representatives and if necessary by electing new representatives.

## The United States on the World Stage

By 1793 disagreements over foreign affairs had emerged as the primary source of friction in American public life. The political divisions created by Hamilton’s financial program hardened into ideologically oriented

factions that argued vehemently over whether the country’s foreign policy should favor industrial and overseas mercantile interests or those of farmers, planters, small businesses, and artisans. Moreover, having ratified its Constitution in the year that the French Revolution began (1789), the new United States government entered the international arena as European tensions were once again exploding. The rapid spread of pro-French revolutionary ideas and organizations alarmed Europe’s monarchs and aristocrats. Perceiving a threat to their social orders as well as their territorial interests, most European nations declared war on France by early 1793. For most of the next twenty-two years—until Napoleon’s final defeat in 1815—Europe and the Atlantic world remained in a state of war.

While most Americans hoped that their nation could avoid this latest European conflict, the fact was that the interests and ambitions of many of their compatriots collided at critical points with those of Britain, France, Spain, or some combination of these powers. Thus it was that differences over foreign policy fused with those over domestic affairs, further intensifying the partisanship of American politics.

### *Spanish Power in the Far West*

The late eighteenth century marked a brief, limited revival of Spanish fortunes in North America. Influenced by the Indian policies of France and Britain, Spanish officials shifted from futilely attempting to conquer their Indian enemies in the Southwest and southern Plains to a policy of peaceful trade. Under the new plan, they would, as Louisiana’s Governor Bernardo de Gálvez put it, provide Native Americans with the “sundry conveniences of life of whose existence they previously knew nothing, and which they now look upon as indispensable.” Among the “conveniences” Gálvez had in mind were poorly made guns, which the Indians would be obliged to have regularly repaired by Spanish gunsmiths, and alcohol. By the end of the century, the new policy had enabled Spain to make peace with the Comanches, Utes, Navajos, and most of the Apache nations that had previously threatened their settlements in New Mexico and Texas.

These reforms were part of a larger effort by Spain to counter potential rivals for North American territory and influence. The first challenge came in the north Pacific Ocean, where Spain enjoyed an unchallenged monopoly. Lacking any maritime rivals, Spain every year dispatched its “Manila galleons,” which sailed





### Spanish Settlements in New California, 1784

*While the United States was struggling to establish its independence, Spain was extending its empire northward along the Pacific coast.*

north from Mexico's Pacific coast to Monterey Bay in California and then turned eastward for the long voyage to Asia's shores. But meanwhile, in the 1740s, Russian traders in Siberia had crossed the Bering Sea and had begun trading with Alaskan natives for sea-otter pelts, frequently using brutal force and spreading deadly diseases in the process. Soon the Russians moved farther south to trade with the wealthy Indians of the Northwest Coast. By the 1770s the exploring voyages of Britain's Captain James Cook and others revealed the wealth such pelts were bringing to Russian merchants. The Russians carried the otterskins overland through Siberia to China where they exchanged them for silk cloth, porcelain ware, and other fine objects. Sensing the profits such trade could generate, British and American maritime traders began plying Northwest coastal waters in the 1780s. Trading cloth, metal tools, and other goods to the Indians, they carried furs to Hawaii—also made known to Europeans and Americans by Cook—and traded them to China-bound merchants for Chinese goods. These luxuries were then carried back to Europe and America and sold to affluent consumers who prized them for their exotic designs and fine craftsmanship. Thus began the "China trade," which brought tidy profits to many a

Boston merchant and fueled American dreams of expanding to the Pacific.

Responding to these inroads, Spain boldly expanded its empire northward from Mexico. In 1769 it established "New California," a long stretch of coast from San Diego to Sonoma (north of San Francisco). Efforts to encourage large-scale Hispanic immigration to New California failed, so that the colony was sustained primarily by its religious missions to coastal Native Americans, several *presidios* (forts), and a few large *ranchos* (ranches). Seeking refuge from inland adversaries, the Indians welcomed the Spanish at first. But the Franciscan missionaries sought to convert them to Catholicism and "civilize" them by imposing rigid disciplinary measures and putting them to work in vineyards and in other enterprises. Meanwhile, Spanish colonists' spreading of epidemic and venereal diseases among natives precipitated a decline in the Indians' numbers from about 72,000 in 1770 to about 18,000 by 1830.

Having strengthened its positions in Texas, New Mexico, and California, Spain attempted to befriend Indians in the area later known as Arizona. In this way, Spain hoped to dominate North America from the Pacific to Louisiana on the Gulf of Mexico. But these hopes were thwarted by resistance from the Hopi, Quechan (Yuma), and other Native Americans. Fortunately for Spain, this region had not yet attracted the interest of other outside powers. Spain's tenuous hold on the Southwest would later be inherited by the independent republic of Mexico (see Chapter 13).

### *The Trans-Appalachian Frontier*

East of the Mississippi River, Spain, Britain, the United States, and the various local Indian nations jockeyed for advantage in a region that all considered central to their interests and which Native Americans regarded as homelands.

Unable to prevent American settlers from occupying territory it claimed in the Southeast, Spain sought to win the newcomers' allegiance by offering them citizenship. Noting that Congress under the Articles of Confederation seemed ready to accept the permanent closing of New Orleans in return for Spanish concessions elsewhere (see Chapter 6), many westerners began talking openly of secession. "I am decidedly of the opinion," wrote Kentucky's attorney general in 1787, "that this western country will in a few years Revolt from the Union and endeavor to erect an Independent



### Disputed Territorial Claims, Spain and the United States, 1783–1796

*The two nations' claims to lands east of the Mississippi and north of the thirty-first parallel were a principal point of contention until the Treaty of San Lorenzo was ratified in 1796.*

Government." In 1788 Tennessee conspirators boldly advertised their flirtation with Spain by naming a large district along the Cumberland River after Spain's governor in New Orleans. Most westerners who accepted Spanish favors and gold meant only to pocket badly needed cash in return for vague promises of goodwill. The episode showed, however, that leading citizens were susceptible to foreign manipulation and subversion. As young Andrew Jackson concluded in 1789, making some arrangements with the Spanish seemed "the only immediate way to obtain peace with the Savage [Indians]."

In the early years of Washington's administration, Spanish officials continued to bribe well-known political figures in Tennessee and Kentucky, among them a former general on Washington's staff, James Wilkinson. Thomas Scott, a congressman from western Pennsylvania, meanwhile schemed with the British. Between 1791 and 1796, the federal government anxiously admitted Vermont, Kentucky, and Tennessee to the Union, partly in the hope of strengthening their sometimes flickering loyalty to the United States.

Consulting with the Senate as the Constitution required, President Washington nevertheless tried to keep tight control of foreign policy. Realizing that he could not quickly resolve the complex western problem, he pursued a course of patient diplomacy that was intended "to preserve the country in peace if I can, and to be prepared for war if I cannot." The prospect of peace improved in 1789 when Spain unexpectedly opened New Orleans to American commerce, although exports remained subject to a 15 percent duty. Although westerners bitterly resented a 15 percent Spanish duty on exports, secessionist sentiment gradually subsided.

Washington now moved to weaken Spanish influence in the West by neutralizing Spain's most important ally, the Creek Indians. The Creeks numbered more than twenty thousand, including perhaps five thousand warriors, and they bore a fierce hostility toward Georgian settlers, whom they called *Ecunnaunuxulgee*, or "the greedy people who want our lands." In 1790 the Creek leader Alexander McGillivray signed the Treaty of New York with the United States. The treaty permitted American settlers to occupy lands in the Georgia piedmont fought over since 1786, but in other respects preserved Creek territory against U.S. expansion. Washington insisted that Georgia restore to the Creeks' allies, the Chickasaws and Choctaws, the vast area along the Mississippi River known as the Yazoo Tract, which Georgia claimed and had begun selling off to white land speculators (see Chapter 8).

Washington adopted a harsher policy toward Great Britain's Indian allies in the Great Lakes region. In 1790 his first effort to force peace through military action failed when General Josiah Harmer was defeated by an alliance of Indians, losing nearly two hundred of his soldiers. A second campaign ended in disaster on November 4, 1791, when Ohio Indians killed nine hundred men out of a force of fourteen hundred led by General Arthur St. Clair.

While employing military force, the Washington administration, led by Secretary of War Henry Knox, also sought to pacify the Indians through a benevolent policy similar to that proclaimed by the British in 1763 (see Chapter 5). Alarmed by the chaos on the frontier, where trespassers invaded Indian lands and the native peoples rejected U.S. claims to sovereignty, the government formally recognized Indian title as secure and inalienable except by the "free consent" of the Indians themselves. To reinforce this policy, Congress enacted laws prohibiting trespassing on Indian lands, punishing



crimes committed there by non-Indians, outlawing alcohol, and, in the Indian Non-Intercourse Act (1790), regulating trade. In addition, the administration sought to encourage Indians to leave off their “savage” ways and become “civilized,” by which it meant above all abandoning communal landownership and seasonal migrations for hunting, gathering, and fishing. By adopting private property and a strictly agricultural way of life, Knox and others thought, Indians would find a niche for themselves in American society while making much additional land available for non-Indians.

Knox recognized that his “civilization” policy would have limited appeal. Although most Indians were receptive to European material goods, they were unwilling to give up their traditional ways entirely and assimilate into an alien culture. And most whites were equally averse to integrating Native Americans into their society. Accordingly, the United States continued to pressure most Native Americans to sell their lands and move farther west.

With many Indians opposed to abandoning both their lands and their cultures, and with St. Clair’s defeat in 1791, Washington’s frontier policy lay in a shambles. Not only had two military expeditions suffered defeat in the Northwest Territory, but in 1792 the Spanish had persuaded the Creeks to renounce their two-year-old treaty with the federal government and to resume hostilities. Ultimately, the damage done to U.S. prestige by these setbacks convinced many Americans that the combined strength of Britain, Spain, and the Native Americans could be counterbalanced only by an alliance with France.

### ***France and Factional Politics***

One of the most momentous events in history, the French Revolution began in 1789 with the meeting (for the first time in almost two centuries) of France’s legislative assembly, the Estates General. Americans remained fundamentally sympathetic to the revolutionary cause as the French abolished nobles’ privileges, wrote a constitution, and bravely repelled invading armies from Austria and Prussia. France became a republic early in 1793; it then proclaimed a war of all peoples against all kings, in which it assumed that the United States would eagerly enlist.

Enthusiasm for a pro-French foreign policy raged in the South and on the frontier, in particular after France went to war against Spain and Great Britain in 1793. Increasingly, western settlers and southern speculators in



**Stimafachki of the Koasati Creeks,**

by John Trumbull, 1790

*This portrait was sketched during the U.S.–Creek conference that resulted in the Treaty of New York.*

frontier lands hoped for a decisive French victory in Europe that, they reasoned, would leave Britain and Spain militarily too exhausted to continue meddling in the West. The United States could then insist on free navigation of the Mississippi, force the evacuation of British garrisons, and end both nations’ support of Indian resistance.

Moreover, a slave uprising in France’s Caribbean colony of Saint Domingue (later renamed Haiti) soon generated passionate anti-British sentiment in the South. White southerners grew alarmed for the future of slavery and their own lives as thousands of terrified French planters fled to the United States from Saint Domingue with accounts of how British invaders in 1793 had supported the rebellious slaves. The blacks had fought with determination and inflicted heavy casualties on the French. Assuming that Africans were incapable of rebelling on their own, southern whites concluded that the British had intentionally sparked the bloodbath and would do the same in the South. Anti-British hysteria even began to undermine South Carolina’s loyalty to Federalist policies.

Northern and southern reactions to the French Revolution also diverged for economic reasons. In the North merchants’ growing antagonism toward France

reflected not only their conservatism but also their awareness that good relations with Britain were essential for their region's prosperity. Virtually all the nation's merchant marine operated from northern ports, and by far the largest share of U.S. foreign trade was with Great Britain. Merchants, shippers, and ordinary sailors in New England, Philadelphia, and New York feared that an alliance with France would provoke British retaliation against this valuable commerce, and they argued that the United States could win valuable concessions by demonstrating friendly intentions toward Great Britain. Indeed, important members of Parliament, including Prime Minister William Pitt the Younger, seemed to favor liberalizing trade with the United States.

Southerners had no such reasons to favor Britain. Southern spokesmen viewed Americans' reliance on British commerce as a menace to national self-determination and wished to divert most U.S. trade to France. Jefferson and Madison repeatedly demanded that British imports be reduced through the imposition of steep discriminatory duties on cargoes shipped from England and Scotland in British vessels. In the heat of the debate, Federalist opponents of a discriminatory tariff warned that Britain, which sold more manufactured goods to the United States than to any other country, would not stand by while a weak French ally pushed it into depression. If Congress adopted this program of trade retaliation, Hamilton predicted in 1792, "there would be, in less than six months, an open war between the United States and Great Britain."

Many southern citizens also had personal stakes in trans-Appalachian affairs because Virginia and North Carolina had rewarded Revolutionary soldiers with western land. Whether these veterans intended to move west themselves or to profit by selling their rights to others, all wanted to see the western territories prosper. Hoping to make a quick fortune in land speculation, southern planters (including George Washington) had borrowed heavily to buy frontier real estate; but uncertainty about the West's future made them worry that land prices would crash. By 1789 a potent combination of small farmers and landed gentry in the South had become enraged at foreign barriers to frontier expansion and eagerly supported politicians such as Jefferson and Madison who advocated strong measures against the British and Spanish.

After declaring war on Britain and Spain in 1793, France actively tried to embroil the United States in the conflict. The French dispatched Edmond Genet as min-

ister to the United States with orders to mobilize republican sentiment in support of France, enlist American mercenaries to conquer Spanish territories and attack British shipping, and strengthen the treaty of alliance between the two nations. Much to the French government's disgust, however, President Washington issued a proclamation of American neutrality on April 22.

Meanwhile, Citizen Genet (as he was known in French Revolutionary style) had arrived on April 8. He found no shortage of southern volunteers for his American Foreign Legion despite America's official neutrality. Making generals of George Rogers Clark of Kentucky and Elisha Clarke of Georgia, Genet directed them to seize the Spanish garrisons at New Orleans and St. Augustine. Clark openly defied Washington's Neutrality Proclamation by advertising for recruits for his mission in Kentucky newspapers; Clarke began drilling three hundred troops on the Florida border. But the French failed to provide adequate funds for either campaign. Although the American recruits were willing to fight for France, few were willing to fight for free, and so both expeditions eventually disintegrated.

However, Genet did not need funds to outfit privateers, whose crews were paid from captured plunder. By the summer of 1793, almost a thousand Americans were at sea in a dozen ships flying the French flag. These privateers seized more than eighty British vessels and towed them to U.S. ports, where French consuls sold the ships and cargoes at auction.

### *The British Crisis*

Even though the Washington administration swiftly closed the nation's harbors to Genet's buccaneers and requested the French ambassador's recall, his exploits provoked an Anglo-American crisis. George III's ministers decided that only a massive show of force would deter further American aggression. Accordingly, on November 6, 1793, the Privy Council issued secret orders confiscating any foreign ships trading with French islands in the Caribbean. The council purposely delayed publishing these instructions until after most American ships carrying winter provisions to the Caribbean left port, so that their captains would not know that they were sailing into a war zone. The Royal Navy then seized more than 250 American vessels.

Meanwhile, the U.S. merchant marine was suffering a second galling indignity—the drafting of its crewmen into the Royal Navy. Thousands of British sailors, including numerous naval deserters, had previously



### Negotiating the Treaty of Greenville

*In this detail of a contemporary painting believed to have been done by a member of General Wayne's staff, Chief Little Turtle of the Miamis speaks to Wayne, who stands with one hand behind his back.*



fled to U.S. ships, where they hoped to find an easier life than under the tough, poorly paying British system. In late 1793 British naval officers began routinely inspecting American crews for British subjects, whom they then impressed (forcibly enlisted) as the king's sailors. Overzealous commanders sometimes broke royal orders by taking U.S. citizens, and in any case the British did not recognize former subjects' right to adopt American citizenship. Impressment scratched a raw nerve in most Americans, who recognized that their government's willingness to defend its citizens from such contemptuous abuse was a critical test of national character.

Next the British boldly challenged the United States for control of the West. In February 1794 Canada's royal governor delivered an inflammatory speech at an Indian council, denying U.S. claims north of the Ohio River and urging his listeners to destroy every white settlement in the Northwest. Soon British troops were building an eighth garrison on U.S. soil, Fort Miami, near present-day Toledo, Ohio. Meanwhile, the Spanish encroached further upon territory owned by the United States by building Fort San Fernando in 1794 at what is now Memphis, Tennessee.

Hoping to halt the drift toward war, Washington launched a desperate diplomatic initiative in 1794. He

sent Chief Justice John Jay to Great Britain, dispatched Thomas Pinckney to Spain, and authorized General Anthony Wayne to negotiate a treaty with the Indians of the Ohio Valley.

Having twice defeated federal armies, the Indians scoffed at Washington's peace offer. But the tide turned as "Mad Anthony" Wayne led three thousand U.S. troops deep into Indian homelands and ruthlessly razed every village within his reach. On August 20, 1794, his troops routed a thousand Indians at the Battle of Fallen Timbers just two miles from British Fort Miami. Wayne's army then built an imposing stronghold to challenge British authority in the Northwest, appropriately named Fort Defiance. Indian morale plummeted. In August 1795 Wayne compelled twelve northeastern tribes to sign the Treaty of Greenville, which opened most of modern-day Ohio to white settlement and ended U.S.-Indian hostilities in the region for sixteen years.

Wayne's success allowed John Jay to win a major diplomatic victory in London: a British promise to withdraw troops from American soil. He also managed to gain access to West Indian markets for small American ships, but only by bargaining away U.S. rights to load cargoes of sugar, molasses, and coffee from the Caribbean. On other points, Jay found the British un-

yielding. Aside from fellow Federalists, few Americans could interpret Jay's Treaty as preserving peace with honor.

Jay's Treaty left Britain free not only to violate American neutrality but also to ruin a profitable commerce by restricting U.S. trade with French ports during wartime. Many opponents, moreover, passionately decried Jay's failure to end impressment and predicted that Great Britain would thereafter force even more Americans into the Royal Navy. And southerners resented that Jay had not achieved their long-sought goal of compensation for slaves taken away by the British army during the Revolution. As the Federalist-dominated Senate ratified the treaty by a one-vote margin in 1795, Jay nervously joked that he could find his way across the country by the fires of rallies burning him in effigy.

Despite its unpopularity, Jay's Treaty defused an explosive crisis with Great Britain before war became inevitable and ended a twelve-year British occupation of U.S. territory. Although the Senate rejected the provision granting limited trading rights with the West Indies in return for a British monopoly over certain commodities, Jay's Treaty played a critical role in stimulating an enormous expansion of American trade. British governors in the West Indies used the treaty's ratification as an excuse to proclaim their harbors open to U.S. ships. Other British officials permitted Americans to develop a thriving commerce with India, even though this trade infringed on the East India Company's monopoly. Within a few years after 1795, American exports to the British Empire shot up 300 percent.

On the heels of Jay's Treaty came an unqualified diplomatic triumph engineered by Thomas Pinckney. Ratified in 1796, the Treaty of San Lorenzo with Spain (also called Pinckney's Treaty) won westerners the right of unrestricted, duty-free access to world markets via the Mississippi River. Spain also promised to recognize the thirty-first parallel as the United States' southern boundary, to dismantle all fortifications on American soil, and to discourage Indian attacks against western settlers.

By 1796 the Washington administration thus had successfully defended the country's territorial integrity, restored peace to the frontier, opened the Mississippi for western exports, made it possible for northeastern shippers to regain British markets, and kept the nation out of a dangerous European war. As the popular outcry over Jay's Treaty demonstrated, however, the nation's foreign policy had left Americans much more deeply divided in 1796 than they had been in 1789.

## Battling for the Nation's Soul

Besides distrusting centralized executive authority, colonial and Revolutionary Americans feared organized political parties. Labeling parties "factions," Americans (and many Britons) assumed that such groups were formed by corrupt conspirators operating against the liberties of the people. Neither the Constitution nor *The Federalist* had envisioned political parties, and none existed in 1789 when Washington became president. By the end of his second term, however, politically conscious Americans had split into two hostile parties, Federalists and Republicans, as instruments for advancing their interests, ambitions, and ideals.

The unfolding struggle transcended the economic and sectional differences so evident in earlier disputes about Hamiltonian finance and the possibility of war with Britain. After 1796 a battle raged over the very future of representative government, culminating in the election of 1800, whose outcome would determine whether the nation's political elite could accommodate demands from ordinary citizens for a more active and influential role in determining government policy. No issue was more important or hotly argued than the matter of officeholders' accountability to their constituents.

### *Ideological Confrontation*

By the mid-1790s the French Revolution had led many Americans to reassess their political values. American attitudes toward events in France divided sharply after that nation's revolutionary regime turned radical in 1793–1794, sending thousands of "counterrevolutionaries" to the guillotine. The polarization of American opinion assumed a strongly, though not completely, regional dimension.

For northern Federalists, revolutionary France became an abomination—"an open hell," thundered Massachusetts Federalist Fisher Ames, "still ringing with agonies and blasphemies, still smoking with sufferings and crimes." New England was the United States' most militantly Protestant region, and most of its middle-class and elite citizens came to detest the French government's disregard for civil rights and its attempt to substitute the adoration of Reason for the worship of God. Middle Atlantic elites, who were perhaps less religious than New Englanders but even more conservative, condemned French leaders as evil radicals who incited the poor against the rich.



Federalists trembled at the thought of guillotines and “mob rule” looming in the United States’ future. Memories of Shays’s Rebellion and the Whiskey Rebellion reinforced their fears. So did the tendency of artisans in Philadelphia and New York to bandy the French revolutionary slogan “Liberty, Equality, Fraternity” and to admire pro-French politicians such as Jefferson. Moreover, Citizen Genet had openly encouraged opposition to the Washington administration and, even more troubling, he had found hundreds of Americans willing to fight for France. Federalists worried that all of this was just the tip of an iceberg.

By the mid-1790s Federalist leaders had concluded that it was dangerous to involve the public too deeply in politics. The people, they believed, were not evil-minded but simply undependable and could easily fall prey to a rabble rouser such as Genet. As Senator George Cabot of Massachusetts put it, “The many do not think at all.” For Federalists, democracy meant “government by the passions of the multitude.” They consequently argued that ordinary white male property owners should not be presented with choices over policy during elections; instead, voters ought to choose among elite candidates according to their personal merits. Thus Federalists favored a government in which elected officials would rule in the people’s name but would be independent of direct popular influence.

A very different understanding of republican ideology surfaced in urban areas of New England and the

Middle Atlantic states, and ran particularly high in the South. Republican opponents of Federalist measures stressed the corruption inherent in a powerful government dominated by a highly visible few, and insisted that liberty would be safe only if power were diffused among virtuous, independent citizens. Whereas Federalists denounced self-interest as inimical to the public good, their opponents argued that self-interest could be pursued virtuously in a society in which property and other means to economic independence were widely available rather than being monopolized by the wealthy few. Jefferson, Madison, and other republicans interpreted the American and French revolutions as opening the way to a new kind of human community in which self-interested individuals recognized their common interest in maintaining a stable society responsive to the needs of all.

A radical ideology like republicanism, with its emphasis on liberty and equality, might seem anomalous among southern slaveowners. In fact, however, such men were among its most forceful proponents. Although a few southern republicans advocated abolishing slavery gradually, most declined to trouble themselves unduly over their ownership of human beings. The liberty and equality they advocated were intended for white men only, even though articulated in universal terms. With their own labor force consisting of enslaved blacks rather than of free white wage workers, southern elites feared popular participation in politics

### **The Republican Court,**

by Daniel Huntington

*Federalists emphasized the dignity of the national government by staging sumptuous balls and formal receptions. Administration critics saw these affairs as an effort to emulate European court life. Washington, although mindful of upholding presidential dignity, found public functions tedious, and his stiff formality often masked his personal discomfort.*



far less than did their northern counterparts. Overlooking the possibility that their slaves understood their ideas and their debates, they maintained a confidence built on the loyalty toward them of nonelite whites.

Self-interest, too, drove men like Jefferson and Madison to rouse ordinary citizens' concerns about civic affairs. The widespread awe in which Washington was held inhibited open criticism of him, his policies, and his fellow Federalists. If, however, the Federalists could be held accountable to the public, they would think twice before enacting measures opposed by the majority; or if they persisted in advocating misguided policies, they would ultimately be removed from office. Such reasoning led Jefferson, a wealthy landowner and large slaveholder, to say, "I am not among those who fear the people; they and not the rich, are our dependence for continued freedom."

Organized efforts to turn public opinion against the Federalists had begun in October 1791 with the publication of the nation's first opposition newspaper, the *National Gazette*. Then in 1793–1794, popular dissatisfaction with the government's policies led to the formation of dozens of Democratic (or Republican) societies, primarily in seaboard cities but also in the rural South and in frontier towns. Their memberships ranged from planters and merchants to artisans and sailors. Conspicuously absent were clergymen, the poor, and nonwhites.

Sharply critical of the Federalists, the societies spread dissatisfaction with the Washington administration's policies. Federalists interpreted their emotional appeals to ordinary people as demagoguery and denounced the societies' followers as "democrats, mobocrats, & all other kinds of rats." They feared that the societies would grow into revolutionary organizations. During the Whiskey Rebellion, Washington publicly denounced "certain self-created societies." So great was his prestige that the societies temporarily broke up. But by attacking them, Washington had at last ended his nonpartisan stance and identified himself unmistakably with the Federalists. The censure would cost him dearly.

### ***The Republican Party***

Neither Jefferson nor Madison belonged to a Democratic society. However, these private clubs helped publicize administration critics' views, and they initiated into political activity numerous voters who would later support Jefferson's and Madison's Republican party.

Prior to the mid-1790s, politically aware Americans believed that deliberately organizing a political faction or party was a corrupt, subversive action. The Constitution's framers had neither wanted nor planned for political parties. In *The Federalist* No. 10, Madison (the future partisan) had claimed that the Constitution would prevent the rise of national political factions. Republican ideology commonly assumed that factions or parties would fill Congress with politicians of little ability and less integrity, pursuing selfish goals at the expense of national welfare. Good citizens, it was assumed, would shun partisan scheming. These ideals, however, began to waver as controversy mounted over Hamilton's program and foreign policy. Jefferson finally resigned from the cabinet in 1793, and thereafter even the president could not halt the widening political split. Each side saw itself as the guardian of republican virtue and attacked the other as an illegitimate "cabal" or "faction."

In 1794 party development reached a decisive stage. Shortly after Washington had openly identified himself with Federalist policies, followers of Jefferson who called themselves Republicans (rather than the more radical-sounding "Democrats") successfully attacked the Federalists' pro-British leanings in many local elections and won a slight majority in the House of Representatives. The election signaled the Republicans' transformation from a coalition of officeholders to a broad-based party capable of coordinating local political campaigns throughout the nation.

Federalists and Republicans alike used the press to mold public opinion. In the 1790s American journalism came of age as the number of newspapers multiplied from 92 to 242, mostly in New England and the Middle Atlantic states. By 1800 newspapers had perhaps 140,000 paid subscribers (about one-fifth of the eligible voters), and their secondhand readership probably exceeded 300,000. Newspapers of both camps were libelous and irresponsible. They cheapened the quality of public discussion through incessant fear mongering and character assassination. Republicans stood accused of plotting a reign of terror and of wishing to turn the nation over to France. Federalists faced charges of favoring a hereditary aristocracy and even of planning to establish an American dynasty by marrying off John Adams's daughter to George III. Such tactics whipped up mutual distrust and made political debate emotional and subjective. Nevertheless, the newspaper warfare stimulated many citizens to become politically active.



# George Washington's Inaugural Journey Through Trenton, 1789

*Washington received a warm welcome in Trenton, site of his first victory during the Revolutionary War.*



Behind the inflammatory rhetoric, the Republicans' central charge was that the Federalists had evolved into a faction bent on enriching wealthy citizens at the taxpayers' expense. In 1794 a Republican writer claimed that Federalist policies would create "a privileged order of men . . . who shall enjoy the honors, the emoluments, and the patronage of government, without contributing a farthing to its support." The Republicans wildly exaggerated when claiming that their opponents were scheming to introduce legal privilege, aristocracy, and monarchy. But they correctly identified the Federalists' fundamental assumption: that citizens' worth could be measured in terms of their money.

Republican charges that the president secretly supported alleged Federalist plots to establish a monarchy enraged Washington. "By God," Jefferson reported him swearing, "he [the president] would rather be in his grave than in his present situation . . . he had rather be on his farm than to be made *emperor of the world*." Furthermore, the president took alarm at the stormy debate over Jay's Treaty, and he dreaded the nation's polarization into hostile factions. Republicans' abuse sharply stung him. Lonely and surrounded by mediocre advisers after Hamilton's return to private life, Washington decided in the spring of 1796 to retire after two terms. Four years earlier, Madison had drafted the president's parting message to the nation; but now Wash-

ington called on Hamilton to give a sharp political twist to his Farewell Address.

The heart of Washington's message was a vigorous condemnation of political parties. Partisan alignments, he insisted, endangered the republic's survival, especially if they became entangled in disputes over foreign policy. Washington warned that the country's safety depended on citizens' avoiding "excessive partiality for one nation and excessive dislike of another." Otherwise, independent-minded "real patriots" would be overwhelmed by demagogues championing foreign causes and paid by foreign governments. Aside from scrupulously fulfilling its existing treaty obligations and maintaining its foreign commerce, the United States must avoid "political connection" with Europe and its wars. If the United States gathered its strength under "an efficient government," it could defy any foreign challenge; but if it became sucked into Europe's quarrels, violence, and corruption, then the republican experiment was doomed. Washington and Hamilton had skillfully turned the central argument of republicanism against their Republican critics. They had also evoked a vision of America virtuously isolated from foreign intrigue and power politics, which would remain a potent inspiration until the twentieth century.

Washington left the presidency in 1797 and died in 1799. Like many later presidents, he went out amid a barrage of criticism. During his brief retirement, the na-

tion's political division into Republicans and Federalists hardened into a two-party system.

### ***The Election of 1796***

As the election of 1796 approached, the Republicans cultivated a large, loyal body of voters. Their efforts to marshal support marked the first time since the Revolution that the political elite had effectively mobilized ordinary Americans to take an interest in public affairs. The Republicans' constituency included the Democratic societies, workingmen's clubs, and immigrant-aid associations.

Immigrants became a prime target for Republican recruiters. During the 1790s the United States absorbed perhaps twenty thousand French refugees from Saint Domingue and more than sixty thousand Irish, including some who had been exiled for their opposition to British rule. Although potential immigrant voters were few—comprising less than 2 percent of the electorate—the Irish in particular could exert crucial influence in Pennsylvania and New York, where public opinion was closely divided and a few hundred immi-

grant voters could tip the balance away from the Federalists.

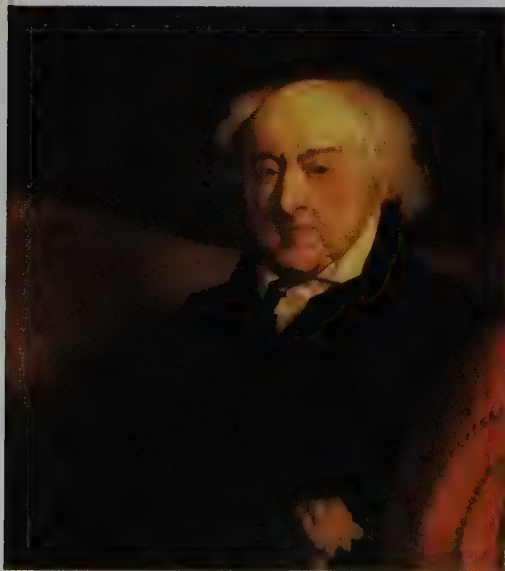
In 1796 the presidential candidates were Vice President John Adams, supported by the Federalists, and the Republicans' Jefferson. Republicans expected to win as many southern electoral votes and congressional seats as the Federalists counted on in New England, New Jersey, and South Carolina. The crucial "swing" states were Pennsylvania and New York, where the Republicans fought hard to win the large immigrant (particularly Irish) vote with their pro-French and anti-British rhetoric. In the end, however, the Republicans took Pennsylvania but not New York, and so Jefferson lost the presidency by just three electoral votes. The Federalists narrowly regained control of the House and maintained their firm grip on the Senate. But by a political fluke possible under the Constitution at the time, Jefferson became vice president.\*

Adams's brilliance, insight, and idealism have rarely been equaled among American presidents. Like many intellectuals, however, Adams was more comfortable with ideas than with people, more theoretical than practical, and rather inflexible. He inspired trust and often admiration but could not command personal loyalty. His wisdom and historical vision were drowned out in highly emotional political debate. Adams's rational, reserved personality was likewise ill suited to inspiring the electorate, and he ultimately proved unable to unify the country.

### ***The French Crisis***

Adams was initially fortunate, however, that French provocations produced a sharp backlash against the Republicans. The French interpreted Jay's Treaty as an American attempt to assist the British in their war against France. On learning of Jefferson's defeat, the French ordered the seizure of American ships carrying goods to British ports; and within a year the French had plundered more than three hundred vessels. The French government rubbed in its contempt for the United States by directing that every American captured on a British naval ship (even those involuntarily impressed) should be hanged.

**John Adams**, by Gilbert Stuart, 1826 (Detail)  
*The Adamses hailed from Quincy, Massachusetts. Soon after the elder Adams's death, John Quincy Adams, now president, commissioned a final portrait of his father. This gentle and distinguished canvas was the result.*



\* The Constitution then stipulated that the presidential candidate with the second-highest electoral vote would become vice president. This was one example of the Constitution's failure to provide for political partisanship.



Hoping to avoid war, Adams sent a peace commission to Paris. But the French foreign minister, Charles de Talleyrand, refused to meet the delegation, instead promising through three unnamed agents ("X, Y, and Z") that talks could begin after he received \$250,000 and France obtained a loan of \$12 million. This barefaced demand for a bribe became known as the XYZ Affair. Americans reacted to it with outrage. "Millions for defense, not one cent for tribute" became the nation's battle cry as the 1798 congressional elections began.

The XYZ Affair discredited the Republicans' foreign policy views, but the party's leaders compounded the damage by refusing to condemn French aggression and opposing Adams's call for defensive measures. The Republicans tried to excuse French behavior, whereas the Federalists rode a wave of militant patriotism. In the 1798 elections, Jefferson's supporters were routed almost everywhere, even in the South.

Congress responded to the XYZ Affair by arming fifty-four ships to protect American commerce. During the Quasi-War—an undeclared Franco-American naval conflict in the Caribbean from 1798 to 1800—U.S. forces seized ninety-three French privateers at the loss of just one vessel. The British navy meanwhile extended the protection of its convoys to America's merchant marine. By early 1799 the French were a nuisance but no longer a serious threat at sea.

Meanwhile, the Federalists in Congress tripled the regular army to ten thousand men in 1798, with an automatic expansion of land forces to fifty thousand in case of war. But the risk of a land war with the French was minimal. In reality, the Federalists primarily wanted a military force ready in the event of a civil war, for the crisis had produced near-hysteria about conspiracies that were being hatched by French and Irish malcontents flooding into the United States.

Federalists were well aware that the French legation was not only engaged in espionage but also making treasonous suggestions to prominent persons. The government knew, for example, that in 1796 General Victor Collot had traveled from Pittsburgh to New Orleans under orders to investigate the prospects for establishing a pro-French, independent nation west of the mountains, and also that he had examined strategic locations to which rebellious frontier dwellers might rally. The State Department heard in 1798 that France had created in the West "a party of mad Americans ready to join with them at a given Signal."

## *The Alien and Sedition Acts*

The Federalists also insisted that the likelihood of open war with France required stringent legislation to protect national security. In 1798 the Federalist-dominated Congress accordingly passed four measures known collectively as the Alien and Sedition Acts. Adams neither requested nor particularly wanted these laws, but he deferred to Federalist congressional leaders and signed them.

The least controversial of the four laws, the Alien Enemies Act, outlined procedures for determining whether the citizens of a hostile country posed a threat to the United States as spies or saboteurs; if so, they were to be deported or jailed. The law established fundamental principles for protecting national security and respecting the rights of enemy citizens. It was to operate only if Congress declared war and so was not used until the War of 1812 (see Chapter 8).

Second, the Alien Friends Act, a temporary peacetime statute, authorized the president to expel any foreign residents whose activities he considered dangerous. The law did not require proof of guilt, on the assumption that spies would hide or destroy evidence of their crime. Republicans maintained that the law's real purpose was to deport prominent immigrants critical of Federalist policies.

Republicans also denounced the third law, the Naturalization Act. This measure increased the residency requirement for U.S. citizenship from five to fourteen years (the last five continuously in one state), with the purpose of reducing Irish voting.

Finally came the Sedition Act, the only one of these measures enforceable against U.S. citizens. Its alleged purpose was to distinguish between free speech and attempts at encouraging others to violate federal laws or to overthrow the government. But the act nevertheless defined criminal activity so broadly that it blurred any real distinction between sedition and legitimate political discussion. Thus it forbade an individual or group "to oppose any measure or measures of the United States"—wording that could be interpreted to ban any criticism of the party in power. Another clause made it illegal to speak, write, or print any statement about the president that would bring him "into contempt or disrepute." Under such restrictions, for example, a newspaper editor might face imprisonment for disapproving of an action by Adams or his cabinet members. The Federalist *Gazette of the United States* expressed the



### **Congressional Pugilists, 1798**

*A cartoonist satirizes the fiercely partisan debates in Congress surrounding the Alien and Sedition acts.*

twisted logic of the Sedition Act perfectly: “It is patriotism to write in favor of our government—it is sedition to write against it.”

Sedition cases were heard by juries, which could decide if the defendant had really intended to stir up rebellion or was merely expressing political dissent. But however one looked at it, the Sedition Act interfered with free speech. Ingeniously, the Federalists wrote the law to expire in 1801 (so that it could not be turned against them if they lost the next election) and to leave them free meanwhile to heap abuse on the *vice* president, Jefferson.

The principal target of Federalist repression was the U.S. opposition press. Four of the five largest Republican newspapers were charged with sedition just as the election of 1800 was getting under way. The attorney general used the Alien Friends Act to threaten Irish journalist John Daly Burk with expulsion (Burk went underground instead). Scottish editor Thomas Callender was being deported when he suddenly qualified for citizenship. Now unable to expel Callender, the government tried him for sedition before an all-Federalist jury, which sent him to prison for criticizing the president.

Federalist leaders never intended to fill the jails with Republican martyrs. Rather, they wanted to use a small number of highly visible prosecutions to intimidate most journalists and candidates into keeping quiet dur-

ing the election of 1800. The attorney general charged seventeen persons with sedition and won ten convictions. Among the victims was the Republican congressman Matthew Lyon of Vermont (“Ragged Matt, the democrat,” to the Federalists), who spent four months in prison for publishing a blast against Adams.

Vocal criticism of Federalist repression erupted during the summer of 1798 in Virginia and Kentucky. Militia commanders in these states mustered their regiments, not to drill but to hear speeches demanding that the federal government respect the Bill of Rights. Entire units then signed petitions denouncing the Alien and Sedition Acts. The symbolic implications of these protests were sobering. Young men stepped forward to sign petitions on drumheads with a pen in one hand and a gun in the other, as older officers who had fought in the Conti-

ental Army looked on approvingly. It was not hard to imagine Kentucky rifles being substituted for quill pens as the men who had led one revolution took up arms again.

Ten years earlier, opponents of the Constitution had warned that giving the national government extensive powers would eventually endanger freedom. By 1798 their prediction seemed to have come true. Shocked Republicans realized that because the Federalists controlled all three branches of the government, neither the Bill of Rights nor the system of checks and balances protected individual liberties. In this context, the doctrine of states’ rights was advanced as a means of preventing the national government from violating basic freedoms.

Madison and Jefferson anonymously wrote two manifestos on states’ rights that the assemblies of Virginia and Kentucky officially endorsed in 1798. Madison’s Virginia Resolutions and Jefferson’s Kentucky Resolutions declared that the state legislatures had never surrendered their right to judge the constitutionality of federal actions and that they retained an authority called *interposition*, which enabled them to protect the liberties of their citizens. A set of Kentucky Resolutions adopted in November 1799 added that objectionable federal laws might be “nullified” by the states. The terms *interposition* and *nullification* were not defined, but the intention was to invalidate the enforcement of



any federal law in a state that had deemed the law unconstitutional. Interposition challenged the jurisdiction of federal courts and could have led state militias to march into a federal courtroom to halt proceedings at bayonet point.

Although no other states endorsed these resolutions (most in fact expressed disapproval), their passage demonstrated the great potential for violence in the late 1790s. So did a minor insurrection called the Fries Rebellion, which broke out in 1799 when crowds of Pennsylvania German farmers released prisoners jailed for refusing to pay taxes needed to fund the national army's expansion. But the disturbance collapsed just as federal cavalry arrived.

The nation's leaders increasingly acted as if a crisis were imminent. Vice President Jefferson hinted that events might push the southern states into secession from the Union, while President Adams hid guns in his home. After passing through Richmond and learning that state officials were purchasing thousands of muskets for the militia, an alarmed Supreme Court justice wrote in January 1799 that "the General Assembly of Virginia are pursuing steps which will lead directly to civil war." A tense atmosphere hung over the Republic as the election of 1800 neared.

### *The Election of 1800*

In the election the Republicans rallied around Jefferson for president and the wily New York politician Aaron Burr for vice president. The Federalists meanwhile became mired in wrangling between Adams and the more extreme "High Federalists" who looked to Alexander Hamilton for guidance. That the nation survived the election of 1800 without a civil war or the disregard of voters' wishes owed much to the good sense of the more moderate leaders of both parties. Thus Jefferson and Madison discouraged radical activity that might provoke intervention by the national army, while Adams rejected High Federalist demands that he ensure victory by deliberately sparking an insurrection or asking Congress to declare war on France.

"Nothing but an open war can save us," argued one High Federalist cabinet officer. But when Adams suddenly discovered the French willing to seek peace in 1799, he proposed a special diplomatic mission. "Surprise, indignation, grief & disgust followed each other in quick succession," said a Federalist senator on hearing the news. Adams obtained Senate approval for his

envoys only by threatening to resign and so make Jefferson president. Outraged High Federalists tried unsuccessfully to dump Adams, but this ill-considered maneuver rallied most New Englanders around their stubborn, upright president.

Adams's negotiations with France did not achieve a settlement until 1801, but the expectation that normal—and perhaps friendly—relations with the French would resume prevented the Federalists from exploiting charges of Republican sympathy for the enemy. Without the immediate threat of war, moreover, voters grew resentful that in merely two years, taxes had soared 33 percent to support an army that had done nothing except chase terrified Pennsylvania farmers. As the danger of war receded, voters gave the Federalists less credit for standing up to France and more blame for ballooning the national debt by \$10 million.

Two years after their triumph in the 1798 elections, support for the Federalists had eroded sharply. High Federalists who had hoped for war spitefully withheld the backing that Adams needed to win. The Republicans meanwhile redoubled their efforts to elect Jefferson. They were especially successful in mobilizing voters in Philadelphia and New York, where artisans, farmers, and some entrepreneurs were ready to forsake the Federalists, whom they saw as defenders of entrenched privilege and upstart wealth. As a result, popular interest in politics rose sharply. Voter turnouts in 1800 leaped to more than double those of 1788, rising from about 15 percent to almost 40 percent, and in hotly contested Pennsylvania and New York more than half the eligible voters participated.

Playing on their opponent's reputation as a religious free thinker, the Federalists forged a case against Jefferson that came down to urging citizens to vote for "GOD—AND A RELIGIOUS PRESIDENT; or impiously declare for JEFFERSON—AND NO GOD!!!" The ploy did not prevent thousands of deeply religious Baptists, Methodists, and other dissenters from voting Republican. (The Federalists overlooked the fact that Adams was scarcely more conventional in his religious views than Jefferson.)

Adams lost the presidency by just 8 electoral votes out of 138. He would have won if his party had not lost control of New York's state senate, which chose the electors, after a narrow defeat in New York City. Unexpectedly, Jefferson and his running mate Burr also carried South Carolina because their backers made lavish promises of political favors to that state's legislators.

Although Adams lost, Jefferson's election was not assured. Because all 73 Republican electors voted for both their party's nominees, the electoral college deadlocked in a Jefferson-Burr tie.\* The choice of president devolved upon the House of Representatives, where thirty-five ballots over six days produced no result. Finally, Delaware's only representative, a Federalist, abandoned Burr and gave Jefferson the presidency by history's narrowest margin.

## Economic and Social Change

The growing partisanship of American politics mirrored the growing complexity of American society after independence. Three principal components contributed to this complexity: first, the shift away from small-scale, largely subsistence farming by substantial numbers of northeasterners; second, the migration westward of thousands of white Americans and black slaves, and the consequent pressures on Native Americans' lands; and third, the renewal of slavery as a viable economic system. Together these trends triggered a sharpening of conflicts between economic interests, social classes, and regions that was frequently manifested in party politics. But the changes also led to a hardening of the lines separating Americans by race. And because racial divisions worked primarily to the disadvantage of people excluded from the electorate, they were ignored in partisan discourse.

### *The Household Economy*

For centuries the backbone of European societies and their colonial offshoots had been an economy in which most production took place in household settings. At the core of each household was a patriarchal family—the male head, his wife, and their unmarried children. Beyond these family members, most households included other people. Some outsiders were relatives but most were either boarders or workers—apprentices and journeymen in artisan shops, servants and slaves in well-off households, and slaves, “hired hands,” and tenant farmers in rural settings. (Even slaves who dwelled

in separate “quarters” on large plantations labored in an enterprise centered on their owners' household.) Unlike in our modern world, nearly everyone before the nineteenth century worked at what was temporarily or permanently “home.” The notion of “going to work” would have struck them as odd.

Although households varied in size and economic orientation, the vast majority until the late eighteenth century were those of small farms with few or no members beyond the owner and his family. Such farm families typically included four or five children who contributed to production while requiring no outlays of cash. While husbands and older sons worked in fields at some distance from the house, women, daughters, and small children maintained the barns and gardens near the house and provided food and clothing for all family members. Women, of course, bore and reared all the children as well. As in the colonial period (see Chapter 4), most farm families produced foods and other products largely for their own consumption, adding small surpluses for bartering with neighbors or local merchants. Such families handled relatively little cash.

In the aftermath of the American Revolution, households in the more heavily settled regions of the Northeast, especially New England, began to change. Small plots of land on New England's thin, rocky soil no longer sufficed to support large families, leading young people to look beyond their immediate locales for means of support. While many young men and young couples moved west, unmarried daughters more frequently remained at home where they could help satisfy a growing demand for manufactured cloth. Before the Revolution, affluent colonists had imported cloth as well as finished clothing, but the boycott of British goods led many women to either spin their own or purchase it from other women. After the Revolution, enterprising merchants began catering to urban consumers as well as southern slaveowners seeking to clothe their slaves as cheaply as possible. Making regular circuits through rural areas, the merchants supplied cloth to mothers and daughters in farm households. A few weeks later they would return and pay the women in cash for their handiwork. A comparable transition began in some households of artisans. The shoemakers of Lynn, Massachusetts, had expanded their production during the Revolution when filling orders from the Continental Army. After the war, some more successful artisans began supplying

\* The Twelfth Amendment (ratified in 1804) eliminated the possibility of such problems. It stipulated that electors vote for presidential and vice-presidential candidates as a pair; no longer would the runner-up in the presidential contest become vice president.



leather to other shoemakers and then paying them for the finished product. By 1800 these merchants were taking leather to farm families beyond Lynn in order to fill an annual demand that had risen from 189,000 pairs in 1789 to 400,000. Numerous other enterprises likewise emerged, employing men as well as women to satisfy demands that self-contained households could never have met on their own. For example, a traveler passing through Middleborough, Massachusetts, observed,

In the winter season, the inhabitants . . . are principally employed in making nails, of which they send large quantities to market. This business is a profitable addition to their husbandry; and fills up a part of the year, in which, otherwise, many of them would find little employment.

In these enterprises lay the seeds of America's later industrialization.

Behind the new industries was an ambitious, aggressive class of businessmen. Most of these individuals had begun as merchants, and they now used their profits to invest in factories, ships, government bonds, and banks (see *A Place in Time*). Supporters of Hamilton's economic policies, they believed that the United States would gain strength if Americans balanced agriculture with banking, manufacturing, and commerce, and they wanted to limit American dependence on imported British manufactures. They also insisted that the nation needed a healthy merchant marine standing ready to augment U.S. naval forces in wartime.

Such entrepreneurs stimulated a flurry of innovative business ventures that pointed toward the future. The country's first private banks were founded in the 1780s in Philadelphia, Boston, and New York. Philadelphia merchants created the Pennsylvania Society for the Encouragement of Manufactures and the Useful Arts in 1787. This organization promoted the immigration of English artisans familiar with the latest industrial technology, including Samuel Slater (see Chapter 9), a pioneer of American industrialization who helped establish a cotton-spinning mill at Pawtucket, Rhode Island, in 1793. In 1791 investors from New York and Philadelphia started the Society for the Encouragement of Useful Manufactures, which attempted to demonstrate the potential of large-scale industrial enterprises by building a factory town at Paterson, New Jersey. That same year, New York merchants and insurance underwriters organized America's first formal association

for trading government bonds, out of which the New York Stock Exchange evolved.

### ***Indians in the New Republic***

By 1795 Native Americans who had come under the authority of the United States had suffered severe reductions in population and territory. Innumerable deaths had resulted from battle, famine, exposure to the elements during flight from enemies, and disease. From 1775 to 1795, the Cherokees declined from 16,000 to 10,000 and the Iroquois fell from about 9,000 to 4,000. Meanwhile, in the quarter-century before 1800, Indians forfeited more land than the area inhabited by whites in 1775. Ignoring the Indian Non-Intercourse Act, the states seized Indian lands without congressional approval, crowding Native Americans onto tiny, widely separated reservations. Settlers, liquor dealers, and criminals trespassed on Indian lands, and government agents and missionaries pressured Native Americans to give up their communal lands and traditional cultures. Indians who sold land or worked for whites were often paid in the unfamiliar medium of cash and then found little to spend it on in their isolated communities except liquor.

In the face of such losses and pressures, many Indians became demoralized. Unable to strike back at

**Sauk Chief, c. 1805**

*This portrait probably depicts Wa Pawni Ha, a seventeen-year-old leader of the Sauk nation.*



1790–1800

## Philadelphia in the 1790s

From 1790 to 1800, Philadelphia was the United States' capital, largest city, main financial market, and intellectual and scientific center. Home to 44,000 people in 1790, by 1800 Philadelphia almost doubled its population. This growth occurred despite a series of frightful yellow-fever epidemics, which cost thousands of lives and sent wealthier residents (including President Washington and the entire federal government) fleeing each summer while the disease raged. A constant stream of country people and foreign immigrants poured in, and large numbers of African Americans, Germans, French, Irish, and Scots kept Philadelphia's population diverse.

The dynamism and diversity of Philadelphia's economy made for a society consisting of several distinct layers. The richest 10 percent of Philadelphians owned about half the city's wealth. This upper crust included old Quaker merchant families, recent wartime profiteers, and hustling new entrepreneurs. Philadelphia was still a preindustrial city entirely dependent on foreign trade for its existence, and most of its wealthiest men made their fortunes in commerce.

Philadelphia's economic environment was treacherous, however. Given rapidly changing market conditions, merchants had to be ever ready to act decisively. They repeatedly gambled everything in hopes of developing new overseas markets for Delaware Valley foodstuffs or of expanding the sphere within which they could retail European-made imports. But overseas trade was the most nerve-wracking of all Philadelphia businesses. From 1785 to 1791, bankruptcies reduced the number of trading firms from 514 to 440. Of the sixty-five wealthiest traders operating in 1779, only nine were still in busi-

ness seventeen years later. The survivors were calculating, daring, and grasping.

In 1776 into this competitive commercial world came the half-blind French immigrant Stephen Girard. Relying on a quick mind and a scrappy, abrasive personality, Girard struggled for years just to avoid bankruptcy. But he exemplified the traits necessary for commercial success in Philadelphia—a determination to conduct his business

personally (even when laid up with a painful head wound) and a willingness to take chances. "Since I have not as much as I desire, it seems necessary for me to take some risks or remain always poor." By 1795 he ranked high among the city's wealthiest individuals.

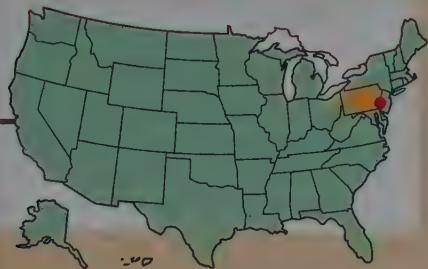
Girard's phenomenal success stemmed from his refusal to imitate conservative businessmen, who demonstrated a "prudence that will risk nothing." He and his fellow entrepre-

### The City or Port of Philadelphia on the River Delaware from Kensington by William Birch, 1800

*This engraving illustrates Philadelphia's remarkable growth in little more than a century. From the large elm under which William Penn was said to have first negotiated with the Delaware Indians (see Chapter 4), it looks across the Delaware River to the busiest port in North America.*







neurs helped propel Philadelphia into the industrial age. They provided two essential elements that would transform the city's economy—capital amassed from foreign trade and a readiness to take chances by investing in manufacturing.

Amid the shifting sands of precarious commerce and embryonic industrial capitalism, the wealthier families in the 1790s helped a flourishing, cultured city continue to prosper. The well-to-do could even afford to send their daughters to the Young Ladies' Academy, founded in 1787 by Dr. Benjamin Rush. "The patriot—the hero—the legislator," Dr. Rush grandly proclaimed, "would find the sweetest reward for their toils, in the approbation of their wives"—and how better could young women bestow this approval than by being educated themselves? Among the subjects that they studied was book-keeping.

Most Philadelphians belonged to artisan families practicing such trades as carpentry, bricklaying, tailoring, and leatherworking. These crafts supplied the city's elite with elegant imitations of the latest European styles in dress, furniture, and housing. The better endowed artisans, along with small merchants and professional men, lived fairly comfortably, if not opulently.

Such was not the case for the thousands of Philadelphians known to those in the upper and middle ranks as the "lower sort." Employed as porters, woodcutters, washer-women, dock workers, seamen, and in dozens of other occupations, the lower sort provided vital services but led lives of uncertainty. When they had work at all, it was temporary and low paying. They had higher rates of illness and death than other Philadelphians because of their poor diets and living conditions

and their inability to afford smallpox immunizations. Many received relief and charity or spent time in the almshouse, workhouse, or jail. Among these unfortunates in 1790 were 1,840 African Americans, all but 301 of whom were free. (Pennsylvania had enacted gradual emancipation in 1780.) Whereas some slaves had been trained in a skilled trade such as blacksmithing, young free men of color found themselves excluded from crafts and relegated to menial work. Still, free blacks strove to improve their lot: this largest free-black community in North America maintained seven schools and three churches, all of which were segregated.

Philadelphia's bustling commerce and unequal distribution of wealth produced social strain. Journeymen printers and leatherworkers, for example, organized and struck in a vain attempt to avoid becoming permanent wage earners. Yet the so-called lower sort largely avoided politics, and the city's most notable political pressure group of the 1790s did not promote class conflict. In this organization, Philadelphia's Democratic Society, artisan masters rubbed shoulders with members of the professional elite like Dr. Rush and famed scientist David Rittenhouse—and with entrepreneur Stephen Girard. What united these re-

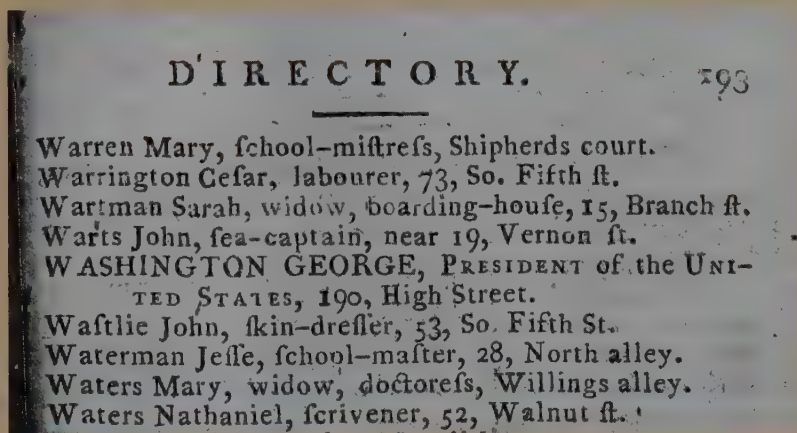


**Absalom Jones,**  
by Raphael Peale, 1810  
*Born a slave, Jones was allowed to study and work for pay; eventually he bought his freedom. He became a businessman, a cofounder of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, and a stalwart in Philadelphia's free black community.*

publican enthusiasts were a conviction that individuals of talent and ambition ought not be held back by special interests, an admiration for revolutionary France, and a determination to preserve the liberty so hard won in the American Revolution.

### Philadelphia City Directory, 1796

*Like other city directories of its time, Philadelphia's listed all heads of households from the most prominent to the most humble.*





### Indian Land Cessions, 1768–1799

*Between 1768 and 1775, western Indians sold off vast territories, mostly hunting grounds in mountainous regions. The upheavals of the Revolutionary War, followed by conflicts with U.S. military forces from 1784 to 1799, led to large cessions of inhabited Indian lands.*

whites, Indians often consumed enormous quantities of whiskey and inflicted violence on one another. All too typical were the tragedies that beset Mary Jemison, born a half-century earlier to white settlers but a Seneca since her wartime capture at age ten. Jemison saw two of her sons murdered by a third in alcohol-related instances before the third met a similar fate.

The Indians' predicament spawned a profound social and moral crisis within tribes threatened by the settlers' expansion. Among those most afflicted were the Seneca Iroquois. But beginning in 1799, a Seneca prophet, Handsome Lake, led his people in one of the most resourceful efforts to resolve this crisis. Overcoming his own problems with liquor, he sought to end alcoholism among Indians by appealing to their religious traditions. At the same time, he welcomed Quaker missionaries and federal aid earmarked for teaching Euro-American agricultural methods to Iroquois men, who had to look for new livelihoods after the loss of most of their lands and the demise of the fur trade. More traditional Indians rejected the notion that Indian men

should work like white farmers; said one, only "squaws and hedgehogs are made to scratch the ground." But many Iroquois men welcomed the change. It was the women who resisted most, because they stood to lose their collective ownership of farmland, their control of the food supply, and their considerable political influence. Women who did not accept Handsome Lake's and the Quakers' urging to exchange farming for housewifery found themselves accused of witchcraft, and some were killed. As a result of such conflicts between traditional and new ways, cultural change among the Senecas and other Native Americans within the United States proceeded fitfully.

### Redefining the Color Line

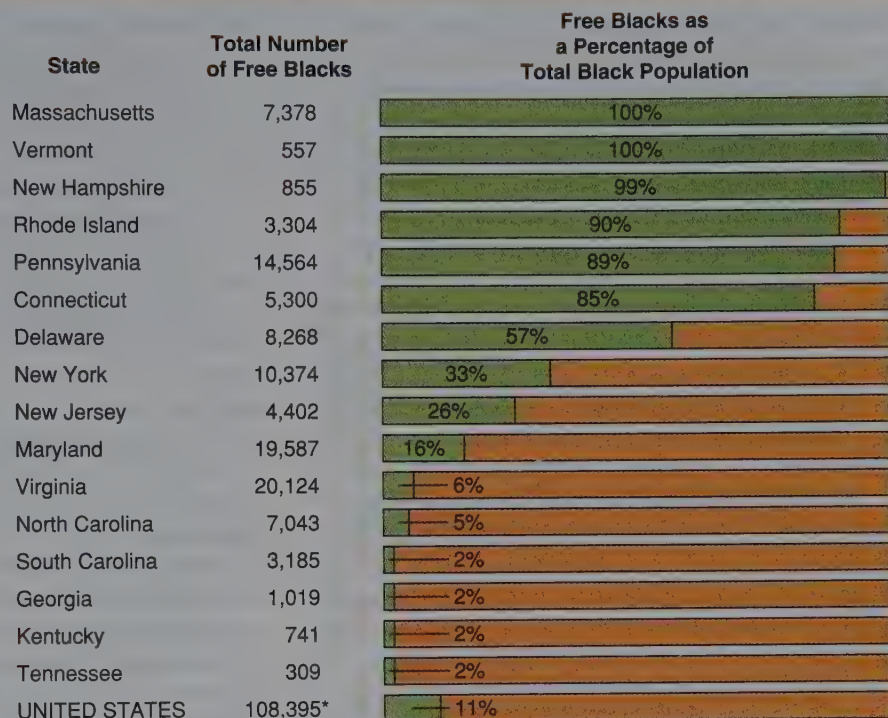
The Republic's first years marked the high tide of African Americans' Revolutionary era success in bettering their lot. Although racism had not disappeared, Jefferson's eloquent words "all men are created equal" had stirred blacks' aspirations and awakened many



## Number and Percentage of Free Blacks, by State, 1800

*Within a generation of the Declaration of Independence, a large free-black population emerged that included every ninth African American. In the North, only in New Jersey and New York did most blacks remain slaves. Almost half of all free blacks lived in the South. Every sixth black in Maryland was free by 1800.*

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census.



\* Total includes figures from the District of Columbia, Mississippi Territory, and Northwest Territory. These areas are not shown on the chart.

whites' consciences. By 1790, 8 percent of all African Americans enjoyed freedom—many having purchased liberty or earned it through wartime service. Ten years later, 11 percent controlled their own fate. Various state reforms meanwhile attempted to improve slaves' conditions. In 1791, for example, the North Carolina legislature declared that the former "distinction of criminality between the murder of a white person and one who is equally an human creature, but merely of a different complexion, is disgraceful to humanity" and authorized the execution of whites who murdered slaves. By 1794 most states had outlawed the Atlantic slave trade.

Hesitant measures to ensure free blacks' legal equality also appeared in the 1780s and early 1790s. Most states dropped restrictions on African Americans' freedom of movement and protected their property. Of the sixteen states in the Union by 1796, all but three either permitted free blacks to vote or made no specific attempt to exclude them. But by then a countertrend was reversing many of the Revolutionary era advances for free blacks. Before the 1790s ended, abolitionist

sentiment ebbed, slavery became more entrenched, and whites resisted accepting even free blacks as fellow citizens.

Federal law led the way in restricting blacks' rights. When Congress established procedures for naturalizing aliens in 1790, it limited eligibility to foreign whites. The federal militia law of 1792 required whites to enroll in local units but allowed states to exclude free blacks, an option that state governments increasingly chose. The navy and the marine corps forbade nonwhite enlistments in 1798. Delaware stripped free blacks of the vote in 1792, and by 1807 Maryland, Kentucky, and New Jersey had followed suit. Free blacks continued to vote and serve in integrated militia organizations in many localities after 1800 (including the slave states of North Carolina and Tennessee), but the number of places that treated them as the political equals of whites dropped sharply in the early 1800s.

An especially revealing indication of changing racial attitudes occurred in 1793, when Congress enacted the Fugitive Slave Law. This law required judges to award possession of a runaway slave upon any for-

mal request by a master or his representative. Accused runaways not only were denied a jury trial but also were sometimes refused permission to present evidence of their freedom. Slaves' legal status as property disqualified them from claiming these constitutional privileges, of course, but the Fugitive Slave Law denied *free* blacks the legal protections that the Bill of Rights guaranteed them as citizens. Congress nevertheless passed this measure without serious opposition. The law marked a striking departure from the atmosphere of the 1780s, when state governments had invariably given whites and free blacks the same legal privileges. By 1793 white Americans clearly found it easy to forget that the Constitution had not limited citizenship to their race, and fewer of them felt honor-bound to protect black rights.

The bloody slave revolt on Saint Domingue notably undermined the trend toward abolition and reinforced the kind of fears that spawned racism. Reports of the slaughter of French slaveowners made white Americans more reluctant to criticize slavery in the United States and helped transform the image of blacks from that of victims of injustice to one of a potential menace. In August 1800 smoldering southern white fears were kindled when a slave insurrection broke out near Virginia's capital, Richmond. Amid the election campaign that year, in which Federalists and Republicans accused

one another of endangering liberty and hinted at violence, a slave named Gabriel thought that the split among whites afforded blacks an opportunity to gain their freedom. Having secretly assembled weapons, more than a thousand slaves planned to march on Richmond. But the plot was leaked on the eve of the march. Obtaining confessions from some participants, the authorities rounded up the rest and executed some thirty-five slaves, including Gabriel. "I have nothing more to offer than what General Washington would have had to offer, had he been taken by the British officers and put to trial by them," said one rebel before his execution. "I have ventured my life in endeavoring to obtain the liberty of my countrymen, and I am a willing sacrifice to their cause."

Gabriel's Rebellion confirmed whites' anxieties that Saint Domingue's terrifying experience could be replayed on American soil. For years thereafter, isolated uprisings occurred, and rumors persisted that a massive revolt was brewing. Antislavery sentiment diminished quickly. By 1810 abolitionists ceased to exert political influence, and not until the 1830s would the antislavery movement recover from the damage inflicted by the Saint Domingue revolt.

A different kind of development also strengthened slavery. During the 1790s demand in the British textile industry stimulated the cultivation of cotton in coastal South Carolina and Georgia. The soil and climate were ideal for growing long-staple cotton, a variety whose fibers could be separated easily from its seed by squeezing it through rollers. In the South's upland and interior regions, however, the only cotton that would thrive was the short-staple variety, whose seed stuck so tenaciously to the fibers that rollers crushed the seeds and ruined the fibers. It was as if southerners had discovered gold only to find that they could not mine it. But in 1793 a Connecticut Yankee, Eli Whitney, rescued the South by inventing a cotton gin that successfully separated the fibers of short-staple cotton from the seed. Quickly copied and improved upon by others, Whitney's invention removed a major obstacle to the spread of cotton cultivation. It gave a new lease on life to plantation slavery and undermined the doubts of those who considered slavery economically outmoded.

By the time Thomas Jefferson assumed the presidency in 1801, free blacks had suffered a noticeable erosion of the political gains made since 1776, and slaves were no closer to freedom. Two vignettes poignantly communicate the plight of African Ameri-

### Doing His Duty by Benjamin Henry Latrobe

*Despite the beginning of its abolition in the North and efforts to extend abolition to the South, slavery persisted at century's end as the foundation of society and the economy in the southern states.*





cans. By arrangement with her late husband, Martha Washington freed the family's slaves in 1800, a year after George died. But many of the freed blacks remained impoverished and dependent on the Washington estate because Virginia law prohibited the education of blacks and otherwise denied them opportunities to realize their freedom. Meanwhile, across the Potomac, work was proceeding on the new national capital that would bear the first president's name. Enslaved blacks performed most of the labor. African Americans were manifestly losing ground.

## CONCLUSION

The United States had survived the perils of birth. First George Washington had steered the country through the initial uncertain years under the new Constitution. But even before his retirement, an outbreak of bitter political strife led to the formation of distinct political parties and threatened the unity of the still fragile new nation. Then a peaceful transfer of power, unprecedented in history, occurred when the Federalists allowed Thomas Jefferson to become president.

The election of 1800 restored political stability to the American political mainstream and marked the triumph of a new understanding of republican virtue. This new understanding recognized both the potential for virtue in all independent (or potentially independent) white men and the political reality that citizens

would form coalitions across regional, social, and occupational lines. But the price of this new understanding was a retreat from the limited idealism of the Revolution on matters of race and the exclusion of nonwhites from the ranks of the virtuous.

## — FOR FURTHER READING —

Joyce Appleby, *Capitalism and a New Social Order: The Republican Vision of the 1790s* (1984). A brief, penetrating analysis of Jeffersonian ideology.

Douglas R. Egerton, *Gabriel's Rebellion: The Virginia Slave Conspiracies of 1800 and 1802* (1993). A thorough, well-written narrative that presents slave resistance against the backdrop of post-Revolutionary society and politics.

Stanley Elkins and Eric McKittrick, *The Age of Federalism: The Early American Republic, 1788–1800* (1993). A magisterial account of politics and diplomacy through the election of 1800.

Richard Hofstadter, *The Idea of a Party System: The Rise of Legitimate Opposition in the United States, 1780–1840* (1969). A classic discussion of how and why America's founders, originally fearing political parties, came to embrace them.

Alan Taylor, *William Cooper's Town: Power and Persuasion on the Frontier of the Early American Republic* (1995). A compelling account of the fall of one elite Federalist in the face of the Republicans' rise to power.

Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard, Based on Her Diary, 1785–1812* (1990). A Pulitzer Prize-winning study of a woman's life in rural America.

Anthony F. C. Wallace, *The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca* (1969). A masterful narrative of the Senecas' devastation during the Revolution and their remarkable cultural recovery afterward.





## DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776

THE UNANIMOUS DECLARATION OF THE THIRTEEN UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has refused his assent to laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his assent should be obtained; and, when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the legislature, a right inestimable to them, and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved representative houses repeatedly, for opposing, with manly firmness, his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exercise; the state remaining, in the mean time, exposed to all the dangers of invasions from without and convulsions within.

He has endeavored to prevent the population of these states; for that purpose obstructing the laws of naturalization of foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migration hither, and raising the conditions of new appropriation of lands.

He has obstructed the administration of justice, by refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers.

He has made judges dependent on his will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of new offices, and sent hither swarms of officers to harass our people and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, standing armies, without the consent of our legislatures.

He has affected to render the military independent of, and superior to, the civil power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws, giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation:

For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us;

For protecting them, by a mock trial, from punishment for any murders which they should commit on the inhabitants of these states;

For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world;

For imposing taxes on us without our consent;

For depriving us, in many cases, of the benefits of trial by jury;

For transporting us beyond seas, to be tried for pretended offenses;

For abolishing the free system of English laws in a neighboring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its boundaries, so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these colonies;

For taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering fundamentally the forms of our governments;

For suspending our own legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated government here, by declaring us out of his protection and waging war against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burned our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation, and tyranny already begun with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy of the head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow-citizens, taken captive on the high seas, to bear arms against their country, to become the executioners of their friends and brethren, or to fall themselves by their hands.

He has excited domestic insurrection among us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes, and conditions.

In every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms; our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Nor have we been wanting in our attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them, from time to time, of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity; and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred, to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They, too, have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace friends.

We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; and that, as free and independent states, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do. And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.

JOHN HANCOCK [*President*]  
[and fifty-five others]



# THE ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION AND PERPETUAL UNION

BETWEEN THE STATES OF NEW HAMPSHIRE, MASSACHUSETTS BAY, RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS, CONNECTICUT, NEW YORK, NEW JERSEY, PENNSYLVANIA, DELAWARE, MARYLAND, VIRGINIA, NORTH CAROLINA, SOUTH CAROLINA, GEORGIA.\*

## Article 1.

The stile of this confederacy shall be "The United States of America."

## Article 2.

Each State retains its sovereignty, freedom and independence, and every power, jurisdiction, and right, which is not by this confederation expressly delegated to the United States, in Congress assembled.

## Article 3.

The said states hereby severally enter into a firm league of friendship with each other for their common defence, the security of their liberties and their mutual and general welfare; binding themselves to assist each other against all force offered to, or attacks made upon them, or any of them, on account of religion, sovereignty, trade, or any other pretence whatever.

## Article 4.

The better to secure and perpetuate mutual friendship and intercourse among the people of the different states in this union, the free inhabitants of each of these states, paupers, vagabonds, and fugitives from justice excepted, shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of free citizens in the several states; and the people of each State shall have free ingress and regress to and from any other State, and shall enjoy therein all the privileges of trade and commerce, subject to the same duties, impositions, and restrictions, as the inhabitants thereof respectively; provided, that such restrictions

shall not extend so far as to prevent the removal of property, imported into any State, to any other State of which the owner is an inhabitant; provided also, that no imposition, duties, or restriction, shall be laid by any State on the property of the United States, or either of them.

If any person guilty of, or charged with treason, felony, or other high misdemeanor in any State, shall flee from justice and be found in any of the United States, he shall, upon demand of the governor or executive power of the State from which he fled, be delivered up and removed to the State having jurisdiction of his offence.

Full faith and credit shall be given in each of these states to the records, acts, and judicial proceedings of the courts and magistrates of every other State.

## Article 5.

For the more convenient management of the general interests of the United States, delegates shall be annually appointed, in such manner as the legislature of each State shall direct, to meet in Congress, on the 1st Monday in November in every year, with a power reserved to each State to recall its delegates, or any of them, at any time within the year, and to send others in their stead for the remainder of the year.

No State shall be represented in Congress by less than two, nor by more than seven members; and no person shall be capable of being a delegate for more than three years in any term of six years; nor shall any person, being a delegate, be capable of holding any office under the United States, for which he, or any other for his benefit, receives any salary, fees, or emolument of any kind.

Each State shall maintain its own delegates in a meeting of the states, and while they act as members of the committee of the states.

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\*This copy of the final draft of the Articles of Confederation is taken from the *Journals*, 9:907–925, November 15, 1777.

In determining questions in the United States, in Congress assembled, each State shall have one vote.

Freedom of speech and debate in Congress shall not be impeached or questioned in any court or place out of Congress: and the members of Congress shall be protected in their persons from arrests and imprisonments, during the time of their going to and from, and attendance on Congress, *except for treason, felony, or breach of the peace.*

#### Article 6.

No State, without the consent of the United States, in Congress assembled, shall send any embassy to, or receive any embassy from, or enter into any conference, agreement, alliance, or treaty with any king, prince, or state; nor shall any person, holding any office of profit or trust under the United States, or any of them, accept of any present, emolument, office or title, of any kind whatever, from any king, prince, or foreign state; nor shall the United States, in Congress assembled, or any of them, grant any title of nobility.

No two or more states shall enter into any treaty, confederation, or alliance, whatever, between them, without the consent of the United States, in Congress assembled, specifying accurately the purposes for which the same is to be entered into, and how long it shall continue.

No State shall lay any imposts or duties which may interfere with any stipulations in treaties entered into by the United States, in Congress assembled, with any king, prince, or state, in pursuance of any treaties already proposed by Congress to the courts of France and Spain.

No vessels of war shall be kept up in time of peace by any State, except such number only as shall be deemed necessary by the United States, in Congress assembled, for the defence of such State or its trade; nor shall any body of forces be kept up by any State, in time of peace, except such number only as, in the judgment of the United States, in Congress assembled, shall be deemed requisite to garrison the forts necessary for the defence of such State; but every State shall always keep up a well regulated and disciplined militia, sufficiently armed and accoutred, and shall provide, and constantly have ready for use, in public stores, a due number of field pieces and tents, and a proper quantity of arms, ammunition and camp equipage.

No State shall engage in any war without the consent of the United States, in Congress assembled, un-

less such State be actually invaded by enemies, or shall have received certain advice of a resolution being formed by some nation of Indians to invade such State, and the danger is so imminent as not to admit of a delay till the United States, in Congress assembled, can be consulted; nor shall any State grant commissions to any ships or vessels of war, nor letters of marque or reprisal, except it be after a declaration of war by the United States, in Congress assembled, and then only against the kingdom or state, and the subjects thereof, against which war has been so declared, and under such regulations as shall be established by the United States, in Congress assembled, unless such States be infested by pirates, in which case vessels of war may be fitted out for that occasion, and kept so long as the danger shall continue, or until the United States, in Congress assembled, shall determine otherwise.

#### Article 7.

When land forces are raised by any State for the common defence, all officers of or under the rank of colonel, shall be appointed by the legislature of each State respectively, by whom such forces shall be raised, or in such manner as such State shall direct; and all vacancies shall be filled up by the State which first made the appointment.

#### Article 8.

All charges of war and all other expences, that shall be incurred for the common defence or general welfare, and allowed by the United States, in Congress assembled, shall be defrayed out of a common treasury, which shall be supplied by the several states, in proportion to the value of all land within each State, granted to or surveyed for any person, as such land and the buildings and improvements thereon shall be estimated according to such mode as the United States, in Congress assembled, shall, from time to time, direct and appoint.

The taxes for paying that proportion shall be laid and levied by the authority and direction of the legislatures of the several states, within the time agreed upon by the United States, in Congress assembled.

#### Article 9.

The United States, in Congress assembled, shall have the sole and exclusive right and power of determining on peace and war, except in the cases mentioned in the



6th article; of sending and receiving ambassadors; entering into treaties and alliances, provided that no treaty of commerce shall be made, whereby the legislative power of the respective states shall be restrained from imposing such imposts and duties on foreigners as their own people are subjected to, or from prohibiting the exportation or importation of any species of goods or commodities whatsoever; of establishing rules for deciding, in all cases, what captures on land or water shall be legal, and in what manner prizes, taken by land or naval forces in the service of the United States, shall be divided or appropriated; of granting letters of marque and reprisal in times of peace; appointing courts for the trial of piracies and felonies committed on the high seas, and establishing courts for receiving and determining, finally, appeals in all cases of captures; provided, that no member of Congress shall be appointed a judge of any of the said courts.

The United States, in Congress assembled, shall also be the last resort on appeal in all disputes and differences now subsisting, or that hereafter may arise between two or more states concerning boundary, jurisdiction or any other cause whatever; which authority shall always be exercised in the manner following: whenever the legislative or executive authority, or lawful agent of any State, in controversy with another, shall present a petition to Congress, stating the matter in question, and praying for a hearing, notice thereof shall be given, by order of Congress, to the legislative or executive authority of the other State in controversy, and a day assigned for the appearance of the parties by their lawful agents, who shall then be directed to appoint, by joint consent, commissioners or judges to constitute a court for hearing and determining the matter in question; but, if they cannot agree, Congress shall name three persons out of each of the United States, and from the list of such persons each party shall alternately strike out one, in the petitioners beginning, until the number shall be reduced to thirteen; and from that number not less than seven, nor more than nine names, as Congress shall direct, shall, in the presence of Congress, be drawn out by lot; and the persons whose names shall be drawn, or any five of them, shall be commissioners or judges to hear and finally determine the controversy, so always as a major part of the judges who shall hear the cause shall agree in the determination; and if either party shall neglect to attend at the day appointed, without shewing reasons which Congress shall judge sufficient, or, being present, shall refuse to strike, the Congress shall proceed to nominate

three persons out of each State, and the secretary of Congress shall strike in behalf of such party absent or refusing; and the judgment and sentence of the court to be appointed, in the manner before prescribed, shall be final and conclusive; and if any of the parties shall refuse to submit to the authority of such court, or to appear or defend their claim or cause, the court shall nevertheless proceed to pronounce sentence or judgment, which shall, in like manner, be final and decisive, the judgment or sentence and other proceedings being, in either case, transmitted to Congress, and lodged among the acts of Congress for the security of the parties concerned: provided, that every commissioner, before he sits in judgment, shall take an oath, to be administered by one of the judges of the supreme or superior court of the State where the cause shall be tried, "well and truly to hear and determine the matter in question, according to the best of his judgment, without favour, affection, or hope of reward": provided, also, that no State shall be deprived of territory for the benefit of the United States.

All controversies concerning the private right of soil, claimed under different grants of two or more states, whose jurisdictions, as they may respect such lands and the states which passed such grants, are adjusted, the said grants, or either of them, being at the same time claimed to have originated antecedent to such settlement of jurisdiction, shall, on the petition of either party to the Congress of the United States, be finally determined, as near as may be, in the same manner as is before prescribed for deciding disputes respecting territorial jurisdiction between different states.

The United States, in Congress assembled, shall also have the sole and exclusive right and power of regulating the alloy and value of coin struck by their own authority, or by that of the respective states; fixing the standard of weights and measures throughout the United States; regulating the trade and managing all affairs with the Indians not members of any of the states; provided that the legislative right of any State within its own limits be not infringed or violated; establishing and regulating post offices from one State to another throughout all the United States, and exacting such postage on the papers passing through the same as may be requisite to defray the expences of the said office; appointing all officers of the land forces in the service of the United States, excepting regimental officers; appointing all the officers of the naval forces, and commissioning all officers whatever in the service of the United States; making rules for the government and

regulation of the said land and naval forces, and directing their operations.

The United States, in Congress assembled, shall have authority to appoint a committee to sit in the recess of Congress, to be denominated "a Committee of the States," and to consist of one delegate from each State, and to appoint such other committees and civil officers as may be necessary for managing the general affairs of the United States, under their direction; to appoint one of their number to preside; provided that no person be allowed to serve in the office of president more than one year in any term of three years; to ascertain the necessary sums of money to be raised for the service of the United States, and to appropriate and apply the same for defraying the public expences; to borrow money or emit bills on the credit of the United States, transmitting, every half year, to the respective states, an account of the sums of money so borrowed or emitted; to build and equip a navy; to agree upon the number of land forces, and to make requisitions from each State for its quota, in proportion to the number of white inhabitants in such State; which requisitions shall be binding; and, thereupon, the legislature of each State shall appoint the regimental officers, raise the men, and cloathe, arm, and equip them in a soldier-like manner, at the expence of the United States; and the officers and men so clothed, armed, and equipped, shall march to the place appointed and within the time agreed on by the United States, in Congress assembled; but if the United States, in Congress assembled, shall, on consideration of circumstances, judge proper that any State should not raise men, or should raise a smaller number than its quota, and that any other State should raise a greater number of men than the quota thereof, such extra number shall be raised, officered, clothed, armed, and equipped in the same manner as the quota of such State, unless the legislature of such State shall judge that such extra number cannot be safely spared out of the same, in which case they shall raise, officer, cloathe, arm, and equip as many of such extra number as they judge can be safely spared. And the officers and men so clothed, armed, and equipped, shall march to the place appointed and within the time agreed on by the United States, in Congress assembled.

The United States, in Congress assembled, shall never engage in a war, nor grant letters of marque and reprisal in time of peace, nor enter into any treaties or alliances, nor coin money, nor regulate the value thereof, nor ascertain the sums and expences neces-

sary for the defence and welfare of the United States, or any of them: nor emit bills, nor borrow money on the credit of the United States, nor appropriate money, nor agree upon the number of vessels of war to be built or purchased, or the number of land or sea forces to be raised, nor appoint a commander in chief of the army or navy, unless nine states assent to the same; nor shall a question on any other point, except for adjourning from day to day, be determined, unless by the votes of a majority of the United States, in Congress assembled.

The Congress of the United States shall have power to adjourn to any time within the year, and to any place within the United States, so that no period of adjournment be for a longer duration than the space of six months, and shall publish the journal of their proceedings monthly, except such parts thereof, relating to treaties, alliances or military operations, as, in their judgment, require secrecy; and the yeas and nays of the delegates of each State on any question shall be entered on the journal, when it is desired by any delegate; and the delegates of a State, or any of them, at his, or their request, shall be furnished with a transcript of the said journal, except such parts as are above excepted, to lay before the legislatures of the several states.

#### **Article 10.**

The committee of the states, or any nine of them, shall be authorized to execute, in the recess of Congress, such of the powers of Congress as the United States, in Congress assembled, by the consent of nine states, shall, from time to time, think expedient to vest them with; provided, that no power be delegated to the said committee for the exercise of which, by the articles of confederation, the voice of nine states, in the Congress of the United States assembled, is requisite.

#### **Article 11.**

Canada acceding to this confederation, and joining in the measures of the United States, shall be admitted into and entitled to all the advantages of this union; but no other colony shall be admitted into the same, unless such admission be agreed to by nine states.

#### **Article 12.**

All bills of credit emitted, monies borrowed and debts contracted by, or under the authority of Congress before the assembling of the United States, in pursuance



of the present confederation, shall be deemed and considered as a charge against the United States, for payment and satisfaction whereof the said United States and the public faith are hereby solemnly pledged.

**Article 13.**

Every State shall abide by the determinations of the United States, in Congress assembled, on all questions which, by this confederation, are submitted to them. And the articles of this confederation shall be inviolably

observed by every State, and the union shall be perpetual; nor shall any alteration at any time hereafter be made in any of them, unless such alteration be agreed to in a Congress of the United States, and be afterwards confirmed by the legislatures of every State.

These articles shall be proposed to the legislatures of all the United States, to be considered, and if approved of by them, they are advised to authorize their delegates to ratify the same in the Congress of the United States; which being done, the same shall become conclusive.

# CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

## PREAMBLE

We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this CONSTITUTION for the United States of America.

## Article I

**Section 1.** All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and a House of Representatives.

**Section 2.** The House of Representatives shall be composed of members chosen every second year by the people of the several States, and the electors in each State shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of the most numerous branch of the State Legislature.

No person shall be a Representative who shall not have attained to the age of twenty-five years, and been seven years a citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an inhabitant of that State in which he shall be chosen.

Representatives and direct taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective numbers, *which shall be determined by adding to the whole number of free persons, including those bound to service for a term of years and excluding Indians not taxed, three-fifths of all other persons.* The actual enumeration shall be made within three years after the first meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent term of ten years, in such manner as they shall by law direct. The number of Representatives shall not exceed one for every thirty thousand, but each State shall have at least one Representa-

*tive; and until such enumeration shall be made, the State of New Hampshire shall be entitled to choose three, Massachusetts eight, Rhode Island and Providence Plantations one, Connecticut five, New York six, New Jersey four, Pennsylvania eight, Delaware one, Maryland six, Virginia ten, North Carolina five, South Carolina five, and Georgia three.*

When vacancies happen in the representation from any State, the Executive authority thereof shall issue writs of election to fill such vacancies.

The House of Representatives shall choose their Speaker and other officers; and shall have the sole power of impeachment.

**Section 3.** The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, *chosen by the legislature thereof*, for six years; and each Senator shall have one vote.

*Immediately after they shall be assembled in consequence of the first election, they shall be divided as equally as may be into three classes. The seats of the Senators of the first class shall be vacated at the expiration of the second year, of the second class at the expiration of the fourth year, and of the third class at the expiration of the sixth year, so that one-third may be chosen every second year; and if vacancies happen by resignation or otherwise, during the recess of the legislature of any State, the Executive thereof may make temporary appointments until the next meeting of the legislature, which shall then fill such vacancies.*

No person shall be a Senator who shall not have attained to the age of thirty years, and been nine years

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Note: Passages that are no longer in effect are printed in italic type.



a citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an inhabitant of that State for which he shall be chosen.

The Vice President of the United States shall be President of the Senate, but shall have no vote, unless they be equally divided.

The Senate shall choose their other officers, and also a President *pro tempore*, in the absence of the Vice President, or when he shall exercise the office of the President of the United States.

The Senate shall have the sole power to try all impeachments. When sitting for that purpose, they shall be on oath or affirmation. When the President of the United States is tried, the Chief Justice shall preside: and no person shall be convicted without the concurrence of two-thirds of the members present.

Judgment in cases of impeachment shall not extend further than to removal from the office, and disqualification to hold and enjoy any office of honor, trust or profit under the United States; but the party convicted shall nevertheless be liable and subject to indictment, trial, judgment and punishment, according to law.

**Section 4.** The times, places and manner of holding elections for Senators and Representatives shall be prescribed in each State by the legislature thereof; but the Congress may at any time by law make or alter such regulations, except as to the places of choosing Senators.

The Congress shall assemble at least once in every year, and such meeting *shall be on the first Monday in December, unless they shall by law appoint a different day.*

**Section 5.** Each house shall be the judge of the elections, returns and qualifications of its own members, and a majority of each shall constitute a quorum to do business; but a smaller number may adjourn from day to day, and may be authorized to compel the attendance of absent members, in such manner, and under such penalties, as each house may provide.

Each house may determine the rules of its proceedings, punish its members for disorderly behavior, and with the concurrence of two-thirds, expel a member.

Each house shall keep a journal of its proceedings, and from time to time publish the same, excepting such parts as may in their judgment require secrecy; and the yeas and nays of the members of either house on any question shall, at the desire of one-fifth of those present, be entered on the journal.

Neither house, during the session of Congress, shall, without the consent of the other, adjourn for more than three days, nor to any other place than that in which the two houses shall be sitting.

**Section 6.** The Senators and Representatives shall receive a compensation for their services, to be ascertained by law and paid out of the treasury of the United States. They shall in all cases except treason, felony and breach of the peace, be privileged from arrest during their attendance at the session of their respective houses, and in going to and returning from the same; and for any speech or debate in either house, they shall not be questioned in any other place.

No Senator or Representative shall, during the time for which he was elected, be appointed to any civil office under the authority of the United States, which shall have been created, or the emoluments whereof shall have been increased, during such time; and no person holding any office under the United States shall be a member of either house during his continuance in office.

**Section 7.** All bills for raising revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives; but the Senate may propose or concur with amendments as on other bills.

Every bill which shall have passed the House of Representatives and the Senate, shall, before it become a law, be presented to the President of the United States; if he approve he shall sign it, but if not he shall return it with objections to that house in which it originated, who shall enter the objections at large on their journal, and proceed to reconsider it. If after such reconsideration two-thirds of that house shall agree to pass the bill, it shall be sent, together with the objections, to the other house, by which it shall likewise be reconsidered, and, if approved by two-thirds of that house, it shall become a law. But in all such cases the votes of both houses shall be determined by yeas and nays, and the names of the persons voting for and against the bill shall be entered on the journal of each house respectively. If any bill shall not be returned by the President within ten days (Sundays excepted) after it shall have been presented to him, the same shall be a law, in like manner as if he had signed it, unless the Congress by their adjournment prevent its return, in which case it shall not be a law.

Every order, resolution, or vote to which the concurrence of the Senate and House of Representatives may be necessary (except on a question of adjournment) shall be presented to the President of the United

States; and before the same shall take effect, shall be approved by him, or being disapproved by him, shall be repassed by two-thirds of the Senate and House of Representatives, according to the rules and limitations prescribed in the case of a bill.

**Section 8.** The Congress shall have power

To lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts, and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States; but all duties, imposts and excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;

To borrow money on the credit of the United States;

To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian tribes;

To establish a uniform rule of naturalization, and uniform laws on the subject of bankruptcies throughout the United States;

To coin money, regulate the value thereof, and of foreign coin, and fix the standard of weights and measures;

To provide for the punishment of counterfeiting the securities and current coin of the United States;

To establish post offices and post roads;

To promote the progress of science and useful arts by securing for limited times to authors and inventors the exclusive right to their respective writings and discoveries;

To constitute tribunals inferior to the Supreme Court;

To define and punish piracies and felonies committed on the high seas and offenses against the law of nations;

To declare war, grant letters of marque and reprisal, and make rules concerning captures on land and water;

To raise and support armies, but no appropriation of money to that use shall be for a longer term than two years;

To provide and maintain a navy;

To make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces;

To provide for calling forth the militia to execute the laws of the Union, suppress insurrections, and repel invasions;

To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining the militia, and for governing such part of them as may be employed in the service of the United States, reserv-

ing to the States respectively the appointment of the officers, and the authority of training the militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress;

To exercise exclusive legislation in all cases whatsoever, over such district (not exceeding ten miles square) as may, by cession of particular States, and the acceptance of Congress, become the seat of government of the United States, and to exercise like authority over all places purchased by the consent of the legislature of the State, in which the same shall be, for erection of forts, magazines, arsenals, dock-yards, and other needful buildings;—and

To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof.

**Section 9.** *The migration or importation of such persons as any of the States now existing shall think proper to admit shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the year 1808; but a tax or duty may be imposed on such importation, not exceeding \$10 for each person.*

The privilege of the writ of habeas corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in cases of rebellion or invasion the public safety may require it.

No bill of attainder or ex post facto law shall be passed.

No capitation, or other direct, tax shall be laid, unless in proportion to the census or enumeration herein before directed to be taken.

No tax or duty shall be laid on articles exported from any State.

No preference shall be given by any regulation of commerce or revenue to the ports of one State over those of another; nor shall vessels bound to, or from, one State, be obliged to enter, clear, or pay duties in another.

No money shall be drawn from the treasury, but in consequence of appropriations made by law; and a regular statement and account of the receipts and expenditures of all public money shall be published from time to time.

No title of nobility shall be granted by the United States: and no person holding any office of profit or trust under them, shall, without the consent of the Congress, accept of any present, emolument, office, or title, of any kind whatever, from any king, prince, or foreign state.



**Section 10.** No State shall enter into any treaty, alliance, or confederation; grant letters of marque and reprisal; coin money; emit bills of credit; make anything but gold and silver coin a tender in payment of debts; pass any bill of attainder, ex post facto law, or law impairing the obligation of contracts, or grant any title of nobility.

No State shall, without the consent of Congress, lay any imposts or duties on imports or exports, except what may be absolutely necessary for executing its inspection laws: and the net produce of all duties and imposts, laid by any State on imports or exports, shall be for the use of the treasury of the United States; and all such laws shall be subject to the revision and control of the Congress.

No State shall, without the consent of Congress, lay any duty of tonnage, keep troops or ships of war in time of peace, enter into any agreement or compact with another State, or with a foreign power, or engage in war, unless actually invaded, or in such imminent danger as will not admit of delay.

## Article II

**Section 1.** The executive power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his office during the term of four years, and, together with the Vice President, chosen for the same term, be elected as follows:

Each state shall appoint, in such manner as the legislature thereof may direct, a number of electors, equal to the whole number of Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress; but no Senator or Representative, or person holding an office of trust or profit under the United States, shall be appointed an elector.

*The electors shall meet in their respective States, and vote by ballot for two persons, of whom one at least shall not be an inhabitant of the same State with themselves. And they shall make a list of all the persons voted for, and of the number of votes for each; which list they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the seat of government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate. The President of the Senate shall, in the presence of the Senate and the House of Representatives, open all the certificates, and the votes shall then be counted. The person having the greatest number of votes shall be the President,*

*if such number be a majority of the whole number of electors appointed; and if there be more than one who have such majority, and have an equal number of votes, then the House of Representatives shall immediately choose by ballot one of them for President; and if no person have a majority, then from the five highest on the list said house shall in like manner choose the President. But in choosing the President the votes shall be taken by States, the representation from each State having one vote; a quorum for this purpose shall consist of a member or members from two-thirds of the States, and a majority of all the States shall be necessary to a choice. In every case, after the choice of the President, the person having the greatest number of votes of the electors shall be the Vice President. But if there should remain two or more who have equal votes, the Senate shall choose from them by ballot the Vice President.*

The Congress may determine the time of choosing the electors and the day on which they shall give their votes; which day shall be the same throughout the United States.

No person except a natural-born citizen, or a citizen of the United States at the time of the adoption of this Constitution, shall be eligible to the office of President; neither shall any person be eligible to that office who shall not have attained to the age of thirty-five years, and been fourteen years a resident within the United States.

In case of the removal of the President from office or of his death, resignation, or inability to discharge the powers and duties of the said office, the same shall devolve on the Vice President, and the Congress may by law provide for the case of removal, death, resignation, or inability, both of the President and Vice President, declaring what officer shall then act as President, and such officer shall act accordingly, until the disability be removed, or a President shall be elected.

The President shall, at stated times, receive for his services a compensation, which shall neither be increased nor diminished during the period for which he shall have been elected, and he shall not receive within that period any other emolument from the United States, or any of them.

Before he enter on the execution of his office, he shall take the following oath or affirmation:—"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the office of the President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

**Section 2.** The President shall be commander in chief of the army and navy of the United States, and of the militia of the several States, when called into the actual service of the United States; he may require the opinion, in writing, of the principal officer in each of the executive departments, upon any subject relating to the duties of their respective offices, and he shall have power to grant reprieves and pardons for offenses against the United States, except in cases of impeachment.

He shall have power, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to make treaties, provided two-thirds of the Senators present concur; and he shall nominate, and by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, judges of the Supreme Court, and all other officers of the United States, whose appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by law: but Congress may by law vest the appointment of such inferior officers, as they think proper, in the President alone, in the courts of law, or in the heads of departments.

The President shall have power to fill up all vacancies that may happen during the recess of the Senate, by granting commissions which shall expire at the end of their next session.

**Section 3.** He shall from time to time give to the Congress information of the state of the Union, and recommend to their consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient; he may, on extraordinary occasions, convene both houses, or either of them, and in case of disagreement between them, with respect to the time of adjournment, he may adjourn them to such time as he shall think proper; he shall receive ambassadors and other public ministers; he shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed, and shall commission all the officers of the United States.

**Section 4.** The President, Vice President and all civil officers of the United States shall be removed from office on impeachment for, and on conviction of, treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors.

## Article III

**Section 1.** The judicial power of the United States shall be vested in one Supreme Court, and in such inferior courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish. The judges, both of the Supreme

and inferior courts, shall hold their offices during good behavior, and shall, at stated times, receive for their services a compensation which shall not be diminished during their continuance in office.

**Section 2.** The judicial power shall extend to all cases, in law and equity, arising under this Constitution, the laws of the United States, and treaties made, or which shall be made, under their authority;—to all cases affecting ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls;—to all cases of admiralty and maritime jurisdiction;—to controversies to which the United States shall be a party;—to controversies between two or more States;—*between a State and citizens of another State*;—between citizens of different States;—between citizens of the same State claiming lands under grants of different States, and between a State, or the citizens thereof, and foreign states, citizens or subjects.

In all cases affecting ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, and those in which a State shall be party, the Supreme Court shall have original jurisdiction. In all the other cases before mentioned, the Supreme Court shall have appellate jurisdiction, both as to law and fact, with such exceptions, and under such regulations, as the Congress shall make.

The trial of all crimes, except in cases of impeachment, shall be by jury; and such trial shall be held in the State where said crimes shall have been committed; but when not committed within any State, the trial shall be at such place or places as the Congress may by law have directed.

**Section 3.** Treason against the United States shall consist only in levying war against them, or in adhering to their enemies, giving them aid and comfort. No person shall be convicted of treason unless on the testimony of two witnesses to the same overt act, or on confession in open court.

The Congress shall have power to declare the punishment of treason, but no attainder of treason shall work corruption of blood, or forfeiture except during the life of the person attainted.

## Article IV

**Section 1.** Full faith and credit shall be given in each State to the public acts, records, and judicial proceedings of every other State. And the Congress may by general laws prescribe the manner in which such acts,



records, and proceedings shall be proved, and the effect thereof.

**Section 2.** The citizens of each State shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of citizens in the several States.

A person charged in any State with treason, felony, or other crime, who shall flee from justice, and be found in another State, shall on demand of the executive authority of the State from which he fled, be delivered up, to be removed to the State having jurisdiction of the crime.

*No person held to service or labor in one State, under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due.*

**Section 3.** New States may be admitted by the Congress into this Union; but no new State shall be formed or erected within the jurisdiction of any other State; nor any State be formed by the junction of two or more States, or parts of States, without the consent of the legislatures of the States concerned as well as of the Congress.

The Congress shall have power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to prejudice any claims of the United States, or of any particular State.

**Section 4.** The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a republican form of government, and shall protect each of them against invasion; and on application of the legislature, or of the executive (when the legislature cannot be convened), against domestic violence.

## Article V

The Congress, whenever two-thirds of both houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose amendments to this Constitution, or, on the application of the legislatures of two-thirds of the several States, shall call a convention for proposing amendments, which, in either case, shall be valid to all intents and purposes, as part of this Constitution, when ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States, or by conventions in

three-fourths thereof, as the one or the other mode of ratification may be proposed by the Congress; provided *that no amendments which may be made prior to the year one thousand eight hundred and eight shall in any manner affect the first and fourth clauses in the ninth section of the first article*; and that no State, without its consent, shall be deprived of its equal suffrage in the Senate.

## Article VI

All debts contracted and engagements entered into, before the adoption of this Constitution, shall be as valid against the United States under this Constitution, as under the Confederation.

This Constitution, and the laws of the United States which shall be made in pursuance thereof; and all treaties made, or which shall be made, under the authority of the United States, shall be the supreme law of the land; and the judges in every State shall be bound thereby, anything in the Constitution or laws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding.

The Senators and Representatives before mentioned, and the members of the several State legislatures, and all executive and judicial officers, both of the United States and of the several States, shall be bound by oath or affirmation to support this Constitution; but no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States.

## Article VII

The ratification of the conventions of nine States shall be sufficient for the establishment of this Constitution between the States so ratifying the same.

Done in Convention by the unanimous consent of the States present, the seventeenth day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-seven and of the Independence of the United States of America the twelfth. In witness whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names.

[Signed by]  
G° WASHINGTON  
Presidt and Deputy from Virginia  
[and thirty-eight others]

## AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

### Article I\*

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

### Article II

A well-regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.

### Article III

No soldier shall, in time of peace, be quartered in any house without the consent of the owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

### Article IV

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

### Article V

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a grand jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the militia, when in actual service in time of war or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use without just compensation.

### Article VI

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of

the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the assistance of counsel for his defense.

### Article VII

In suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury shall be otherwise reexamined in any court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

### Article VIII

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

### Article IX

The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

### Article X

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

### Article XI

*[Adopted 1798]*

The judicial power of the United States shall not be construed to extend to any suit in law or equity, commenced or prosecuted against one of the United States by citizens of another State, or by citizens or subjects of any foreign state.

### Article XII

*[Adopted 1804]*

The electors shall meet in their respective States, and vote by ballot for President and Vice President, one of whom, at least, shall not be an inhabitant of the same State with themselves; they shall name in their ballots the person voted for as President, and in distinct ballots the person voted for as Vice President, and they shall make distinct lists of all persons voted for as President, and of all per-

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\*The first ten Amendments (Bill of Rights) were adopted in 1791.



sons voted for as Vice President, and of the number of votes for each, which lists they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the seat of government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate;—the President of the Senate shall, in the presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the certificates and the votes shall then be counted;—the person having the greatest number of votes for President shall be the President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of electors appointed; and if no person have such majority, then from the persons having the highest numbers not exceeding three on the list of those voted for as President, the House of Representatives shall choose immediately, by ballot, the President. But in choosing the President, the votes shall be taken by States, the representation from each State having one vote; a quorum for this purpose shall consist of a member or members from two-thirds of the States, and a majority of all the States shall be necessary to a choice. And if the House of Representatives shall not choose a President whenever the right of choice shall devolve upon them, before *the fourth day of March* next following, then the Vice President shall act as President, as in the case of the death or other constitutional disability of the President.

The person having the greatest number of votes as Vice President shall be the Vice President, if such a number be a majority of the whole number of electors appointed; and if no person have a majority, then from the two highest numbers on the list the Senate shall choose the Vice President; a quorum for the purpose shall consist of two-thirds of the whole number of Senators, and a majority of the whole number shall be necessary to a choice. But no person constitutionally ineligible to the office of President shall be eligible to that of Vice President of the United States.

### Article XIII

[Adopted 1865]

**Section 1.** Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

**Section 2.** Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

### Article XIV

[Adopted 1868]

**Section 1.** All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof,

are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

**Section 2.** Representatives shall be apportioned among the several States according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each State, excluding Indians not taxed. But when the right to vote at any election for the choice of Electors for President and Vice President of the United States, Representatives in Congress, the executive and judicial officers of a State, or the members of the legislature thereof, is denied to any of the male inhabitants of such State, being twenty-one years of age and citizens of the United States, or in any way abridged, except for participation in rebellion, or other crime, the basis of representation therein shall be reduced in the proportion which the number of such male citizens shall bear to the whole number of male citizens twenty-one years of age in such State.

**Section 3.** No person shall be a Senator or Representative in Congress or Elector of President and Vice President, or hold any office, civil or military, under the United States, or under any State, who, having previously taken an oath, as a member of Congress, or as an officer of the United States, or as a member of any State legislature, or as an executive or judicial officer of any State, to support the Constitution of the United States, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid and comfort to the enemies thereof. Congress may, by a vote of two-thirds of each house, remove such disability.

**Section 4.** The validity of the public debt of the United States, authorized by law, including debts incurred for payment of pensions and bounties for services in suppressing insurrection or rebellion, shall not be questioned. But neither the United States nor any State shall assume or pay any debt or obligation incurred in aid of insurrection or rebellion against the United States, or any claim for the loss or emancipation of any slave; but all such debts, obligations, and claims shall be held illegal and void.

**Section 5.** The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

**Article XV**

[Adopted 1870]

**Section 1.** The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

**Section 2.** The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

**Article XVI**

[Adopted 1913]

The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several States, and without regard to any census or enumeration.

**Article XVII**

[Adopted 1913]

**Section 1.** The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, elected by the people thereof, for six years; and each Senator shall have one vote. The electors in each State shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of [voters for] the most numerous branch of the State legislatures.

**Section 2.** When vacancies happen in the representation of any State in the Senate, the executive authority of such State shall issue writs of election to fill such vacancies: Provided, that the Legislature of any State may empower the executive thereof to make temporary appointments until the people fill the vacancies by election as the Legislature may direct.

**Section 3.** This amendment shall not be so construed as to affect the election or term of any Senator chosen before it becomes valid as part of the Constitution.

**Article XVIII**

[Adopted 1919; repealed 1933]

**Section 1.** *After one year from the ratification of this article the manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors within, the importation thereof into, or the exportation thereof from the United States and all territory subject to the jurisdiction thereof, for beverage purposes, is hereby prohibited.*

**Section 2.** *The Congress and the several States shall have concurrent power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.*

**Section 3.** *This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of the several States, as provided by the Constitution, within seven years from the date of the submission thereof to the States by the Congress.*

**Article XIX**

[Adopted 1920]

**Section 1.** The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

**Section 2.** The Congress shall have the power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

**Article XX**

[Adopted 1933]

**Section 1.** The terms of the President and Vice President shall end at noon on the 20th day of January, and the terms of Senators and Representatives at noon on the 3d day of January, of the years in which such terms would have ended if this article had not been ratified; and the terms of their successors shall then begin.

**Section 2.** The Congress shall assemble at least once in every year, and such meeting shall begin at noon on the 3d of January, unless they shall by law appoint a different day.

**Section 3.** If, at the time fixed for the beginning of the term of the President, the President-elect shall have died, the Vice President-elect shall become President. If a President shall not have been chosen before the time fixed for the beginning of his term, or if the President-elect shall have failed to qualify, then the Vice President-elect shall act as President until a President shall have qualified; and the Congress may by law provide for the case wherein neither a President-elect nor a Vice President-elect shall have qualified, declaring who shall then act as President, or the manner in which one who is to act shall be selected, and such persons shall act accordingly until a President or Vice President shall have qualified.



**Section 4.** The Congress may by law provide for the case of the death of any of the persons from whom the House of Representatives may choose a President whenever the right of choice shall have devolved upon them, and for the case of the death of any of the persons from whom the Senate may choose a Vice President whenever the right of choice shall have devolved upon them.

**Section 5.** Sections 1 and 2 shall take effect on the 15th day of October following the ratification of this article.

**Section 6.** This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the Legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years from the date of its submission.

#### **Article XXI**

*[Adopted 1933]*

**Section 1.** The eighteenth article of amendment to the Constitution of the United States is hereby repealed.

**Section 2.** The transportation or importation into any State, Territory, or Possession of the United States for delivery or use therein of intoxicating liquors, in violation of the laws thereof, is hereby prohibited.

**Section 3.** This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by conventions in the several States, as provided in the Constitution, within seven years from the date of submission thereof to the States by the Congress.

#### **Article XXII**

*[Adopted 1951]*

**Section 1.** No person shall be elected to the office of President more than twice, and no person who has held the office of President, or acted as President, for more than two years of a term to which some other person was elected President shall be elected to the office of President more than once. But this article shall not apply to any person holding the office of President when this article was proposed by the Congress, and shall not prevent any person who may be holding the office of President, or acting as President, during the

term within which this article becomes operative from holding the office of President or acting as President during the remainder of such term.

**Section 2.** This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years from the date of its submission to the States by the Congress.

#### **Article XXIII**

*[Adopted 1961]*

**Section 1.** The District constituting the seat of Government of the United States shall appoint in such manner as the Congress may direct:

A number of electors of President and Vice President equal to the whole number of Senators and Representatives in Congress to which the District would be entitled if it were a State, but in no event more than the least populous State; they shall be in addition to those appointed by the States, but they shall be considered for the purposes of the election of President and Vice President, to be electors appointed by a State; and they shall meet in the District and perform such duties as provided by the twelfth article of amendment.

**Section 2.** The Congress shall have the power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

#### **Article XXIV**

*[Adopted 1964]*

**Section 1.** The right of citizens of the United States to vote in any primary or other election for President or Vice President, for electors for President or Vice President, or for Senator or Representative in Congress, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State by reason of failure to pay any poll tax or other tax.

**Section 2.** The Congress shall have the power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

#### **Article XXV**

*[Adopted 1967]*

**Section 1.** In case of the removal of the President from office or of his death or resignation, the Vice President shall become President.

**Section 2.** Whenever there is a vacancy in the office of the Vice President, the President shall nominate a Vice President who shall take office upon confirmation by a majority vote of both Houses of Congress.

**Section 3.** Whenever the President transmits to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives his written declaration that he is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, and until he transmits to them a written declaration to the contrary, such powers and duties shall be discharged by the Vice President as Acting President.

**Section 4.** Whenever the Vice President and a majority of either the principal officers of the executive departments or of such other body as Congress may by law provide, transmit to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives their written declaration that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Vice President shall immediately assume the powers and duties of the office as Acting President.

Thereafter, when the President transmits to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives his written declaration that no inability exists, he shall resume the powers and duties of his office unless the Vice President and a majority of either the principal officers of the executive department[s] or of such other body as Congress may by law provide, transmit within four days to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives their written declaration that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office. Thereupon Congress shall decide the issue, assembling within forty-eight hours for that purpose if not in session. If the Congress, within twenty-one days after receipt of the latter written declaration,

or, if Congress is not in session, within twenty-one days after Congress is required to assemble, determines by two-thirds vote of both Houses that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Vice President shall continue to discharge the same as Acting President; otherwise, the President shall resume the powers and duties of his office.

## Article XXVI

[Adopted 1971]

**Section 1.** The right of citizens of the United States, who are eighteen years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of age.

**Section 2.** The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

## Article XXVII\*

[Adopted 1992]

No law, varying the compensation for services of the Senators and Representatives, shall take effect, until an election of Representatives shall have intervened.

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\*Originally proposed in 1789 by James Madison, this amendment failed to win ratification along with the other parts of what became the Bill of Rights. However, the proposed amendment contained no deadline for ratification, and over the years other state legislatures voted to add it to the Constitution; many such ratifications occurred during the 1980s and early 1990s as public frustration with Congress's performance mounted. In May 1992 the Archivist of the United States certified that, with the Michigan legislature's ratification, the article had been approved by three-fourths of the states and thus automatically became part of the Constitution. But congressional leaders and constitutional specialists questioned whether an amendment that took 202 years to win ratification was valid, and the issue had not been resolved by the time this book went to press.



## Growth of U.S. Population and Area

<i>Census</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Percentage of Increase over Preceding Census</i>	<i>Land Area Square Miles</i>	<i>Population per Square Mile</i>
1790	3,929,214		867,980	4.5
1800	5,308,483	35.1	867,980	6.1
1810	7,239,881	36.4	1,685,865	4.3
1820	9,638,453	33.1	1,753,588	5.5
1830	12,866,020	33.5	1,753,588	7.3
1840	17,069,453	32.7	1,753,588	9.7
1850	23,191,876	35.9	2,944,337	7.9
1860	31,443,321	35.6	2,973,965	10.6
1870	39,818,449	26.6	2,973,965	13.4
1880	50,155,783	26.0	2,973,965	16.9
1890	62,947,714	25.5	2,973,965	21.2
1900	75,994,575	20.7	2,974,159	25.6
1910	91,972,266	21.0	2,973,890	30.9
1920	105,710,620	14.9	2,973,776	35.5
1930	122,775,046	16.1	2,977,128	41.2
1940	131,669,275	7.2	2,977,128	44.2
1950	150,697,361	14.5	2,974,726*	50.7
1960†	178,464,236	18.4	2,974,726	59.9
1970	204,765,770	14.7	2,974,726	68.8
1980	226,504,825	10.6	2,974,726	76.1
1990	248,709,873	9.8	2,974,726	83.6

\*As remeasured in 1940.

†Not including Alaska (pop. 226,167) and Hawaii (632,772).

**Admission of States into the Union**

<i>State</i>	<i>Date of Admission</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Date of Admission</i>
1. Delaware	December 7, 1787	26. Michigan	January 26, 1837
2. Pennsylvania	December 12, 1787	27. Florida	March 3, 1845
3. New Jersey	December 18, 1787	28. Texas	December 29, 1845
4. Georgia	January 2, 1788	29. Iowa	December 28, 1846
5. Connecticut	January 9, 1788	30. Wisconsin	May 29, 1848
6. Massachusetts	February 6, 1788	31. California	September 9, 1850
7. Maryland	April 28, 1788	32. Minnesota	May 11, 1858
8. South Carolina	May 23, 1788	33. Oregon	February 14, 1859
9. New Hampshire	June 21, 1788	34. Kansas	January 29, 1861
10. Virginia	June 25, 1788	35. West Virginia	June 20, 1863
11. New York	July 26, 1788	36. Nevada	October 31, 1864
12. North Carolina	November 21, 1789	37. Nebraska	March 1, 1867
13. Rhode Island	May 29, 1790	38. Colorado	August 1, 1876
14. Vermont	March 4, 1791	39. North Dakota	November 2, 1889
15. Kentucky	June 1, 1792	40. South Dakota	November 2, 1889
16. Tennessee	June 1, 1796	41. Montana	November 8, 1889
17. Ohio	March 1, 1803	42. Washington	November 11, 1889
18. Louisiana	April 30, 1812	43. Idaho	July 3, 1890
19. Indiana	December 11, 1816	44. Wyoming	July 10, 1890
20. Mississippi	December 10, 1817	45. Utah	January 4, 1896
21. Illinois	December 3, 1818	46. Oklahoma	November 16, 1907
22. Alabama	December 14, 1819	47. New Mexico	January 6, 1912
23. Maine	March 15, 1820	48. Arizona	February 14, 1912
24. Missouri	August 10, 1821	49. Alaska	January 3, 1959
25. Arkansas	June 15, 1836	50. Hawaii	August 21, 1959



# Presidential Elections, 1789–1996

<i>Year</i>	<i>States in the Union</i>	<i>Candidates</i>	<i>Parties</i>	<i>Electoral Vote</i>	<i>Popular Vote</i>	<i>Percentage of Popular Vote</i>
1789	11	GEORGE WASHINGTON John Adams Minor candidates	No party designations	69 34 35		
1792	15	GEORGE WASHINGTON John Adams George Clinton Minor candidates	No party designations	132 77 50 5		
1796	16	JOHN ADAMS Thomas Jefferson Thomas Pinckney Aaron Burr Minor candidates	Federalist Democratic-Republican Federalist Democratic-Republican	71 68 59 30 48		
1800	16	THOMAS JEFFERSON Aaron Burr John Adams Charles C. Pinckney John Jay	Democratic-Republican Democratic-Republican Federalist Federalist Federalist	73 73 65 64 1		
1804	17	THOMAS JEFFERSON Charles C. Pinckney	Democratic-Republican Federalist	162 14		
1808	17	JAMES MADISON Charles C. Pinckney George Clinton	Democratic-Republican Federalist Democratic-Republican	122 47 6		
1812	18	JAMES MADISON DeWitt Clinton	Democratic-Republican Federalist	128 89		
1816	19	JAMES MONROE Rufus King	Democratic-Republican Federalist	183 34		
1820	24	JAMES MONROE John Quincy Adams	Democratic-Republican Independent Republican	231 1		
1824	24	JOHN QUINCY ADAMS Andrew Jackson William H. Crawford Henry Clay	Democratic-Republican Democratic-Republican Democratic-Republican Democratic-Republican	84 99 41 37	108,740 153,544 46,618 47,136	30.5 43.1 13.1 13.2
1828	24	ANDREW JACKSON John Quincy Adams	Democratic National Republican	178 83	642,553 500,897	56.0 44.0
1832	24	ANDREW JACKSON Henry Clay William Wirt John Floyd	Democratic National Republican Anti-Masonic National Republican	219 49 7 11	687,502 530,189 33,108	55.0 42.4 2.6

Because candidates receiving less than 1 percent of the popular vote are omitted, the percentage of popular vote may not total 100 percent. Before the Twelfth Amendment was passed in 1804, the electoral college voted for two presidential candidates; the runner-up became vice president.

**Presidential Elections, 1789–1996** (cont.)

<i>Year</i>	<i>States in the Union</i>	<i>Candidates</i>	<i>Parties</i>	<i>Electoral Vote</i>	<i>Popular Vote</i>	<i>Percentage of Popular Vote</i>
1836	26	MARTIN VAN BUREN	Democratic	170	765,483	50.9
		William H. Harrison	Whig	73	739,795	49.1
		Hugh L. White	Whig	26		
		Daniel Webster	Whig	14		
		W. P. Mangum	Whig	11		
1840	26	WILLIAM H. HARRISON	Whig	234	1,274,624	53.1
		Martin Van Buren	Democratic	60	1,127,781	46.9
1844	26	JAMES K. POLK	Democratic	170	1,338,464	49.6
		Henry Clay	Whig	105	1,300,097	48.1
		James G. Birney	Liberty		62,300	2.3
1848	30	ZACHARY TAYLOR	Whig	163	1,360,967	47.4
		Lewis Cass	Democratic	127	1,222,342	42.5
		Martin Van Buren	Free Soil		291,263	10.1
1852	31	FRANKLIN PIERCE	Democratic	254	1,601,117	50.9
		Winfield Scott	Whig	42	1,385,453	44.1
		John P. Hale	Free Soil		155,825	5.0
1856	31	JAMES BUCHANAN	Democratic	174	1,832,955	45.3
		John C. Frémont	Republican	114	1,339,932	33.1
		Millard Fillmore	American	8	871,731	21.6
1860	33	ABRAHAM LINCOLN	Republican	180	1,865,593	39.8
		Stephen A. Douglas	Democratic	12	1,382,713	29.5
		John C. Breckinridge	Democratic	72	848,356	18.1
		John Bell	Constitutional Union	39	592,906	12.6
1864	36	ABRAHAM LINCOLN	Republican	212	2,206,938	55.0
		George B. McClellan	Democratic	21	1,803,787	45.0
1868	37	ULYSSES S. GRANT	Republican	214	3,013,421	52.7
		Horatio Seymour	Democratic	80	2,706,829	47.3
1872	37	ULYSSES S. GRANT	Republican	286	3,596,745	55.6
		Horace Greeley	Democratic	*	2,843,446	43.9
1876	38	RUTHERFORD B. HAYES	Republican	185	4,034,311	48.0
		Samuel J. Tilden	Democratic	184	4,288,546	51.0
		Peter Cooper	Greenback		75,973	1.0
1880	38	JAMES A. GARFIELD	Republican	214	4,453,295	48.5
		Winfield S. Hancock	Democratic	155	4,414,082	48.1
		James B. Weaver	Greenback-Labor		308,578	3.4
1884	38	GROVER CLEVELAND	Democratic	219	4,879,507	48.5
		James G. Blaine	Republican	182	4,850,293	48.2
		Benjamin F. Butler	Greenback-Labor		175,370	1.8
		John P. St. John	Prohibition		150,369	1.5
1888	38	BENJAMIN HARRISON	Republican	233	5,477,129	47.9
		Grover Cleveland	Democratic	168	5,537,857	48.6
		Clinton B. Fisk	Prohibition		249,506	2.2
		Anson J. Streeter	Union Labor		146,935	1.3

\*When Greeley died shortly after the election, his supporters divided their votes among the minor candidates.

Because candidates receiving less than 1 percent of the popular vote are omitted, the percentage of popular vote may not total 100 percent.



## Presidential Elections, 1789–1996 (cont.)

Year	States in the Union	Candidates	Parties	Electoral Vote	Popular Vote	Percentage of Popular Vote
1892	44	GROVER CLEVELAND	Democratic	277	5,555,426	46.1
		Benjamin Harrison	Republican	145	5,182,690	43.0
		James B. Weaver	People's	22	1,029,846	8.5
		John Bidwell	Prohibition		264,133	2.2
1896	45	WILLIAM MCKINLEY	Republican	271	7,102,246	51.1
		William J. Bryan	Democratic	176	6,492,559	47.7
1900	45	WILLIAM MCKINLEY	Republican	292	7,218,491	51.7
		William J. Bryan	Democratic; Populist	155	6,356,734	45.5
		John C. Wooley	Prohibition		208,914	1.5
1904	45	THEODORE ROOSEVELT	Republican	336	7,628,461	57.4
		Alton B. Parker	Democratic	140	5,084,223	37.6
		Eugene V. Debs	Socialist		402,283	3.0
		Silas C. Swallow	Prohibition		258,536	1.9
1908	46	WILLIAM H. TAFT	Republican	321	7,675,320	51.6
		William J. Bryan	Democratic	162	6,412,294	43.1
		Eugene V. Debs	Socialist		420,793	2.8
		Eugene W. Chafin	Prohibition		253,840	1.7
1912	48	WOODROW WILSON	Democratic	435	6,296,547	41.9
		Theodore Roosevelt	Progressive	88	4,118,571	27.4
		William H. Taft	Republican	8	3,486,720	23.2
		Eugene V. Debs	Socialist		900,672	6.0
		Eugene W. Chafin	Prohibition		206,275	1.4
1916	48	WOODROW WILSON	Democratic	277	9,127,695	49.4
		Charles E. Hughes	Republican	254	8,533,507	46.2
		A. L. Benson	Socialist		585,113	3.2
		J. Frank Hanly	Prohibition		220,506	1.2
1920	48	WARREN G. HARDING	Republican	404	16,143,407	60.4
		James N. Cox	Democratic	127	9,130,328	34.2
		Eugene V. Debs	Socialist		919,799	3.4
		P. P. Christensen	Farmer-Labor		265,411	1.0
1924	48	CALVIN COOLIDGE	Republican	382	15,718,211	54.0
		John W. Davis	Democratic	136	8,385,283	28.8
		Robert M. La Follette	Progressive	13	4,831,289	16.6
1928	48	HERBERT C. HOOVER	Republican	444	21,391,993	58.2
		Alfred E. Smith	Democratic	87	15,016,169	40.9
1932	48	FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT	Democratic	472	22,809,638	57.4
		Herbert C. Hoover	Republican	59	15,758,901	39.7
		Norman Thomas	Socialist		881,951	2.2
1936	48	FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT	Democratic	523	27,752,869	60.8
		Alfred M. Landon	Republican	8	16,674,665	36.5
		William Lemke	Union		882,479	1.9

Because candidates receiving less than 1 percent of the popular vote are omitted, the percentage of popular vote may not total 100 percent.

**Presidential Elections, 1789–1996** *(cont.)*

<i>Year</i>	<i>States in the Union</i>	<i>Candidates</i>	<i>Parties</i>	<i>Electoral Vote</i>	<i>Popular Vote</i>	<i>Percentage of Popular Vote</i>
1940	48	FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT	Democratic	449	27,307,819	54.8
		Wendell L. Willkie	Republican	82	22,321,018	44.8
1944	48	FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT	Democratic	432	25,606,585	53.5
		Thomas E. Dewey	Republican	99	22,014,745	46.0
1948	48	HARRY S. TRUMAN	Democratic	303	24,105,812	49.5
		Thomas E. Dewey	Republican	189	21,970,065	45.1
		Strom Thurmond	States' Rights	39	1,169,063	2.4
		Henry A. Wallace	Progressive		1,157,172	2.4
1952	48	DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER	Republican	442	33,936,234	55.1
		Adlai E. Stevenson	Democratic	89	27,314,992	44.4
1956	48	DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER	Republican	457	35,590,472	57.6
		Adlai E. Stevenson	Democratic	73	26,022,752	42.1
1960	50	JOHN F. KENNEDY	Democratic	303	34,227,096	49.7
		Richard M. Nixon	Republican	219	34,108,546	49.5
		Harry F. Byrd	Independent	15	502,363	.7
1964	50	LYNDON B. JOHNSON	Democratic	486	43,126,506	61.1
		Barry M. Goldwater	Republican	52	27,176,799	38.5
1968	50	RICHARD M. NIXON	Republican	301	31,770,237	43.4
		Hubert H. Humphrey	Democratic	191	31,270,533	42.7
		George C. Wallace	American Independent	46	9,906,141	13.5
1972	50	RICHARD M. NIXON	Republican	520	47,169,911	60.7
		George S. McGovern	Democratic	17	29,170,383	37.5
1976	50	JIMMY CARTER	Democratic	297	40,827,394	49.9
		Gerald R. Ford	Republican	240	39,145,977	47.9
1980	50	RONALD W. REAGAN	Republican	489	43,899,248	50.8
		Jimmy Carter	Democratic	49	35,481,435	41.0
		John B. Anderson	Independent		5,719,437	6.6
		Ed Clark	Libertarian		920,859	1.0
1984	50	RONALD W. REAGAN	Republican	525	54,451,521	58.8
		Walter F. Mondale	Democratic	13	37,565,334	40.5
1988	50	GEORGE H. W. BUSH	Republican	426	47,946,422	54.0
		Michael S. Dukakis	Democratic	112	41,016,429	46.0
1992	50	WILLIAM J. CLINTON	Democratic	370	43,728,275	43.2
		George H. W. Bush	Republican	168	38,167,416	37.7
		H. Ross Perot	Independent		19,237,247	19.0
1996	50	WILLIAM J. CLINTON	Democratic	379	47,401,185	49.0
		Robert Dole	Republican	159	39,197,469	41.0
		H. Ross Perot	Independent	0	8,085,295	8.0

Because candidates receiving less than 1 percent of the popular vote are omitted, the percentage of popular vote may not total 100 percent.



**Vice President and Cabinet Members, 1789–1998***The Washington Administration (1789–1797)*

Vice President	John Adams	1789–1797
Secretary of State	Thomas Jefferson	1789–1793
	Edmund Randolph	1794–1795
	Timothy Pickering	1795–1797
Secretary of Treasury	Alexander Hamilton	1789–1795
	Oliver Wolcott	1795–1797
Secretary of War	Henry Knox	1789–1794
	Timothy Pickering	1795–1796
	James McHenry	1796–1797
Attorney General	Edmund Randolph	1789–1793
	William Bradford	1794–1795
	Charles Lee	1795–1797
Postmaster General	Samuel Osgood	1789–1791
	Timothy Pickering	1791–1794
	Joseph Habersham	1795–1797

*The John Adams Administration (1797–1801)*

Vice President	Thomas Jefferson	1797–1801
Secretary of State	Timothy Pickering	1797–1800
	John Marshall	1800–1801
Secretary of Treasury	Oliver Wolcott	1797–1800
	Samuel Dexter	1800–1801
Secretary of War	James McHenry	1797–1800
	Samuel Dexter	1800–1801
Attorney General	Charles Lee	1797–1801
Postmaster General	Joseph Habersham	1797–1801
Secretary of Navy	Benjamin Stoddert	1798–1801

*The Jefferson Administration (1801–1809)*

Vice President	Aaron Burr	1801–1805
	George Clinton	1805–1809
Secretary of State	James Madison	1801–1809
Secretary of Treasury	Samuel Dexter	1801
	Albert Gallatin	1801–1809
Secretary of War	Henry Dearborn	1801–1809
Attorney General	Levi Lincoln	1801–1805
	Robert Smith	1805
	John Breckinridge	1805–1806
	Caesar Rodney	1807–1809
Postmaster General	Joseph Habersham	1801
	Gideon Granger	1801–1809
Secretary of Navy	Robert Smith	1801–1809

*The Madison Administration (1809–1817)*

Vice President	George Clinton	1809–1812
	Elbridge Gerry	1813–1814
Secretary of State	Robert Smith	1809–1811
	James Monroe	1811–1817
Secretary of Treasury	Albert Gallatin	1809–1813
	George Campbell	1814
	Alexander Dallas	1814–1816
	William Crawford	1816–1817
Secretary of War	William Eustis	1809–1812
	John Armstrong	1813–1814
	James Monroe	1814–1815
	William Crawford	1815–1817
Attorney General	Caesar Rodney	1809–1811
	William Pinkney	1811–1814
	Richard Rush	1814–1817
Postmaster General	Gideon Granger	1809–1814
	Return Meigs	1814–1817
Secretary of Navy	Paul Hamilton	1809–1813
	William Jones	1813–1814
	Benjamin Crowninshield	1814–1817

*The Monroe Administration (1817–1825)*

Vice President	Daniel Tompkins	1817–1825
Secretary of State	John Quincy Adams	1817–1825
Secretary of Treasury	William Crawford	1817–1825
Secretary of War	George Graham	1817
	John C. Calhoun	1817–1825
Attorney General	Richard Rush	1817
	William Wirt	1817–1825
Postmaster General	Return Meigs	1817–1823
	John McLean	1823–1825
Secretary of Navy	Benjamin Crowninshield	1817–1818
	Smith Thompson	1818–1823
	Samuel Southard	1823–1825

*The John Quincy Adams Administration (1825–1829)*

Vice President	John C. Calhoun	1825–1829
Secretary of State	Henry Clay	1825–1829
Secretary of Treasury	Richard Rush	1825–1829
Secretary of War	James Barbour	1825–1828
	Peter Porter	1828–1829
Attorney General	William Wirt	1825–1829
Postmaster General	John McLean	1825–1829
Secretary of Navy	Samuel Southard	1825–1829



*The Jackson Administration (1829–1837)*

Vice President	John C. Calhoun	1829–1833
	Martin Van Buren	1833–1837
Secretary of State	Martin Van Buren	1829–1831
	Edward Livingston	1831–1833
	Louis McLane	1833–1834
	John Forsyth	1834–1837
Secretary of Treasury	Samuel Ingham	1829–1831
	Louis McLane	1831–1833
	William Duane	1833
	Roger B. Taney	1833–1834
	Levi Woodbury	1834–1837
Secretary of War	John H. Eaton	1829–1831
	Lewis Cass	1831–1837
	Benjamin Butler	1837
Attorney General	John M. Berrien	1829–1831
	Roger B. Taney	1831–1833
	Benjamin Butler	1833–1837
Postmaster General	William Barry	1829–1835
	Amos Kendall	1835–1837
Secretary of Navy	John Branch	1829–1831
	Levi Woodbury	1831–1834
	Mahlon Dickerson	1834–1837

*The Van Buren Administration (1837–1841)*

Vice President	Richard M. Johnson	1837–1841
Secretary of State	John Forsyth	1837–1841
Secretary of Treasury	Levi Woodbury	1837–1841
Secretary of War	Joel Poinsett	1837–1841
Attorney General	Benjamin Butler	1837–1838
	Felix Grundy	1838–1840
	Henry D. Gilpin	1840–1841
Postmaster General	Amos Kendall	1837–1840
	John M. Niles	1840–1841
Secretary of Navy	Mahlon Dickerson	1837–1838
	James Paulding	1838–1841

*The William Harrison Administration (1841)*

Vice President	John Tyler	1841
Secretary of State	Daniel Webster	1841
Secretary of Treasury	Thomas Ewing	1841
Secretary of War	John Bell	1841
Attorney General	John J. Crittenden	1841
Postmaster General	Francis Granger	1841
Secretary of Navy	George Badger	1841

*The Tyler Administration (1841–1845)*

Vice President	None	
Secretary of State	Daniel Webster	1841–1843
	Hugh S. Legaré	1843
	Abel P. Upshur	1843–1844
	John C. Calhoun	1844–1845
Secretary of Treasury	Thomas Ewing	1841
	Walter Forward	1841–1843
	John C. Spencer	1843–1844
	George Bibb	1844–1845
Secretary of War	John Bell	1841
	John C. Spencer	1841–1843
	James M. Porter	1843–1844
	William Wilkins	1844–1845
Attorney General	John J. Crittenden	1841
	Hugh S. Legaré	1841–1843
	John Nelson	1843–1845
Postmaster General	Francis Granger	1841
	Charles Wickliffe	1841
Secretary of Navy	George Badger	1841
	Abel P. Upshur	1841
	David Henshaw	1843–1844
	Thomas Gilmer	1844
	John Y. Mason	1844–1845

*The Polk Administration (1845–1849)*

Vice President	George M. Dallas	1845–1849
Secretary of State	James Buchanan	1845–1849
Secretary of Treasury	Robert J. Walker	1845–1849
Secretary of War	William L. Marcy	1845–1849
Attorney General	John Y. Mason	1845–1846
	Nathan Clifford	1846–1848
	Isaac Toucey	1848–1849
Postmaster General	Cave Johnson	1845–1849
Secretary of Navy	George Bancroft	1845–1846
	John Y. Mason	1846–1849

*The Taylor Administration (1849–1850)*

Vice President	Millard Fillmore	1849–1850
Secretary of State	John M. Clayton	1849–1850
Secretary of Treasury	William Meredith	1849–1850
Secretary of War	George Crawford	1849–1850
Attorney General	Reverdy Johnson	1849–1850
Postmaster General	Jacob Collamer	1849–1850
Secretary of Navy	William Preston	1849–1850
Secretary of Interior	Thomas Ewing	1849–1850



*The Fillmore Administration (1850–1853)*

Vice President	None	
Secretary of State	Daniel Webster	1850–1852
	Edward Everett	1852–1853
Secretary of Treasury	Thomas Corwin	1850–1853
Secretary of War	Charles Conrad	1850–1853
Attorney General	John J. Crittenden	1850–1853
Postmaster General	Nathan Hall	1850–1852
	Sam D. Hubbard	1852–1853
Secretary of Navy	William A. Graham	1850–1852
	John P. Kennedy	1852–1853
Secretary of Interior	Thomas McKennan	1850
	Alexander Stuart	1850–1853

*The Pierce Administration (1853–1857)*

Vice President	William R. King	1853
Secretary of State	William L. Marcy	1853–1857
Secretary of Treasury	James Guthrie	1853–1857
Secretary of War	Jefferson Davis	1853–1857
Attorney General	Caleb Cushing	1853–1857
Postmaster General	James Campbell	1853–1857
Secretary of Navy	James C. Dobbin	1853–1857
Secretary of Interior	Robert McClelland	1853–1857

*The Buchanan Administration (1857–1861)*

Vice President	John C. Breckinridge	1857–1861
Secretary of State	Lewis Cass	1857–1860
	Jeremiah S. Black	1860–1861
Secretary of Treasury	Howell Cobb	1857–1860
	Philip Thomas	1860–1861
	John A. Dix	1861
Secretary of War	John B. Floyd	1857–1861
	Joseph Holt	1861
Attorney General	Jeremiah S. Black	1857–1860
	Edwin M. Stanton	1860–1861
Postmaster General	Aaron V. Brown	1857–1859
	Joseph Holt	1859–1861
	Horatio King	1861
Secretary of Navy	Isaac Toucey	1857–1861
Secretary of Interior	Jacob Thompson	1857–1861

*The Lincoln Administration (1861–1865)*

Vice President	Hannibal Hamlin	1861–1865
	Andrew Johnson	1865
Secretary of State	William H. Seward	1861–1865
Secretary of Treasury	Samuel P. Chase	1861–1864
	William P. Fessenden	1864–1865
	Hugh McCulloch	1865
Secretary of War	Simon Cameron	1861–1862
	Edwin M. Stanton	1862–1865
Attorney General	Edward Bates	1861–1864
	James Speed	1864–1865
Postmaster General	Horatio King	1861
	Montgomery Blair	1861–1864
	William Dennison	1864–1865
Secretary of Navy	Gideon Welles	1861–1865
Secretary of Interior	Caleb B. Smith	1861–1863
	John P. Usher	1863–1865

*The Andrew Johnson Administration (1865–1869)*

Vice President	None	
Secretary of State	William H. Seward	1865–1869
Secretary of Treasury	Hugh McCulloch	1865–1869
Secretary of War	Edwin M. Stanton	1865–1867
	Ulysses S. Grant	1867–1868
	Lorenzo Thomas	1868
	John M. Schofield	1868–1869
Attorney General	James Speed	1865–1866
	Henry Stanbery	1866–1868
	William M. Evarts	1868–1869
Postmaster General	William Dennison	1865–1866
	Alexander Randall	1866–1869
Secretary of Navy	Gideon Welles	1865–1869
Secretary of Interior	John P. Usher	1865
	James Harlan	1865–1866
	Orville H. Browning	1866–1869

*The Grant Administration (1869–1877)*

Vice President	Schuyler Colfax	1869–1873
	Henry Wilson	1873–1875
Secretary of State	Elihu B. Washburne	1869
	Hamilton Fish	1869–1877
Secretary of Treasury	George S. Boutwell	1869–1873
	William Richardson	1873–1874
	Benjamin Bristow	1874–1876
	Lot M. Morrill	1876–1877



*The Grant Administration (1869-1877) (cont.)*

Secretary of War	John A. Rawlins	1869
	William T. Sherman	1869
	William W. Belknap	1869-1876
	Alphonso Taft	1876
	James D. Cameron	1876-1877
Attorney General	Ebenezer Hoar	1869-1870
	Amos T. Ackerman	1870-1871
	G. H. Williams	1871-1875
	Edwards Pierrepont	1875-1876
	Alphonso Taft	1876-1877
Postmaster General	John A. J. Creswell	1869-1874
	James W. Marshall	1874
	Marshall Jewell	1874-1876
	James N. Tyner	1876-1877
Secretary of Navy	Adolph E. Borie	1869
	George M. Robeson	1869-1877
Secretary of Interior	Jacob D. Cox	1869-1870
	Columbus Delano	1870-1875
	Zachariah Chandler	1875-1877

*The Hayes Administration (1877-1881)*

Vice President	William A. Wheeler	1877-1881
Secretary of State	William M. Evarts	1877-1881
Secretary of Treasury	John Sherman	1877-1881
Secretary of War	George W. McCrary	1877-1879
	Alex Ramsey	1879-1881
Attorney General	Charles Devens	1877-1881
Postmaster General	David M. Key	1877-1880
	Horace Maynard	1880-1881
Secretary of Navy	Richard W. Thompson	1877-1880
	Nathan Goff, Jr.	1881
Secretary of Interior	Carl Schurz	1877-1881

*The Garfield Administration (1881)*

Vice President	Chester A. Arthur	1881
Secretary of State	James G. Blaine	1881
Secretary of Treasury	William Windom	1881
Secretary of War	Robert T. Lincoln	1881
Attorney General	Wayne MacVeagh	1881
Postmaster General	Thomas L. James	1881
Secretary of Navy	William H. Hunt	1881
Secretary of Interior	Samuel J. Kirkwood	1881

*The Arthur Administration (1881–1885)*

Vice President	None	
Secretary of State	F. T. Frelinghuysen	1881–1885
Secretary of Treasury	Charles J. Folger	1881–1884
	Walter Q. Gresham	1884
	Hugh McCulloch	1884–1885
Secretary of War	Robert T. Lincoln	1881–1885
Attorney General	Benjamin H. Brewster	1881–1885
Postmaster General	Timothy O. Howe	1881–1883
	Walter Q. Gresham	1883–1884
	Frank Hatton	1884–1885
Secretary of Navy	William H. Hunt	1881–1882
	William E. Chandler	1882–1885
Secretary of Interior	Samuel J. Kirkwood	1881–1882
	Henry M. Teller	1882–1885

*The Cleveland Administration (1885–1889)*

Vice President	Thomas A. Hendricks	1885–1889
Secretary of State	Thomas F. Bayard	1885–1889
Secretary of Treasury	Daniel Manning	1885–1887
	Charles S. Fairchild	1887–1889
Secretary of War	William C. Endicott	1885–1889
Attorney General	Augustus H. Garland	1885–1889
Postmaster General	William F. Vilas	1885–1888
	Don M. Dickinson	1888–1889
Secretary of Navy	William C. Whitney	1885–1889
Secretary of Interior	Lucius Q. C. Lamar	1885–1888
	William F. Vilas	1888–1889
Secretary of Agriculture	Norman J. Colman	1889

*The Benjamin Harrison Administration (1889–1893)*

Vice President	Levi P. Morton	1889–1893
Secretary of State	James G. Blaine	1889–1892
	John W. Foster	1892–1893
Secretary of Treasury	William Windom	1889–1891
	Charles Foster	1891–1893
Secretary of War	Redfield Proctor	1889–1891
	Stephen B. Elkins	1891–1893
Attorney General	William H. H. Miller	1889–1891
Postmaster General	John Wanamaker	1889–1893
Secretary of Navy	Benjamin F. Tracy	1889–1893
Secretary of Interior	John W. Noble	1889–1893
Secretary of Agriculture	Jeremiah M. Rusk	1889–1893



*The Cleveland Administration (1893–1897)*

Vice President	Adlai E. Stevenson	1893–1897
Secretary of State	Walter Q. Gresham	1893–1895
	Richard Olney	1895–1897
Secretary of Treasury	John G. Carlisle	1893–1897
Secretary of War	Daniel S. Lamont	1893–1897
Attorney General	Richard Olney	1893–1895
	James Harmon	1895–1897
Postmaster General	Wilson S. Bissell	1893–1895
	William L. Wilson	1895–1897
Secretary of Navy	Hilary A. Herbert	1893–1897
Secretary of Interior	Hoke Smith	1893–1896
	David R. Francis	1896–1897
Secretary of Agriculture	Julius S. Morton	1893–1897

*The McKinley Administration (1897–1901)*

Vice President	Garret A. Hobart	1897–1899
	Theodore Roosevelt	1901
Secretary of State	John Sherman	1897–1898
	William R. Day	1898
	John Hay	1898–1901
Secretary of Treasury	Lyman J. Gage	1897–1901
Secretary of War	Russell A. Alger	1897–1899
	Elihu Root	1899–1901
Attorney General	Joseph McKenna	1897–1898
	John W. Griggs	1898–1901
	Philander C. Knox	1901
Postmaster General	James A. Gary	1897–1898
	Charles E. Smith	1898–1901
Secretary of Navy	John D. Long	1897–1901
Secretary of Interior	Cornelius N. Bliss	1897–1899
	Ethan A. Hitchcock	1899–1901
Secretary of Agriculture	James Wilson	1897–1901

*The Theodore Roosevelt Administration (1901–1909)*

Vice President	Charles Fairbanks	1905–1909
Secretary of State	John Hay	1901–1905
	Elihu Root	1905–1909
	Robert Bacon	1909
Secretary of Treasury	Lyman J. Gage	1901–1902
	Leslie M. Shaw	1902–1907
	George B. Cortelyou	1907–1909

*The Theodore Roosevelt Administration (1901–1909) (cont.)*

Secretary of War	Elihu Root	1901–1904
	William H. Taft	1904–1908
	Luke E. Wright	1908–1909
Attorney General	Philander C. Knox	1901–1904
	William H. Moody	1904–1906
	Charles J. Bonaparte	1906–1909
Postmaster General	Charles E. Smith	1901–1902
	Henry C. Payne	1902–1904
	Robert J. Wynne	1904–1905
	George B. Cortelyou	1905–1907
	George von L. Meyer	1907–1909
Secretary of Navy	John D. Long	1901–1902
	William H. Moody	1902–1904
	Paul Morton	1904–1905
	Charles J. Bonaparte	1905–1906
	Victor H. Metcalf	1906–1908
	Truman H. Newberry	1908–1909
Secretary of Interior	Ethan A. Hitchcock	1901–1907
	James R. Garfield	1907–1909
Secretary of Agriculture	James Wilson	1901–1909
Secretary of Labor and Commerce	George B. Cortelyou	1903–1904
	Victor H. Metcalf	1904–1906
	Oscar S. Straus	1906–1909
	Charles Nagel	1909

*The Taft Administration (1909–1913)*

Vice President	James S. Sherman	1909–1912
Secretary of State	Philander C. Knox	1909–1913
Secretary of Treasury	Franklin MacVeagh	1909–1913
Secretary of War	Jacob M. Dickinson	1909–1911
	Henry L. Stimson	1911–1913
Attorney General	George W. Wickersham	1909–1913
Postmaster General	Frank H. Hitchcock	1909–1913
Secretary of Navy	George von L. Meyer	1909–1913
Secretary of Interior	Richard A. Ballinger	1909–1911
	Walter L. Fisher	1911–1913
Secretary of Agriculture	James Wilson	1909–1913
Secretary of Labor and Commerce	Charles Nagel	1909–1913



*The Wilson Administration (1913–1921)*

Vice President	Thomas R. Marshall	1913–1921
Secretary of State	William J. Bryan	1913–1915
	Robert Lansing	1915–1920
	Bainbridge Colby	1920–1921
Secretary of Treasury	William G. McAdoo	1913–1918
	Carter Glass	1918–1920
	David F. Houston	1920–1921
Secretary of War	Lindley M. Garrison	1913–1916
	Newton D. Baker	1916–1921
Attorney General	James C. McReynolds	1913–1914
	Thomas W. Gregory	1914–1919
	A. Mitchell Palmer	1919–1921
Postmaster General	Albert S. Burleson	1913–1921
Secretary of Navy	Josephus Daniels	1913–1921
Secretary of Interior	Franklin K. Lane	1913–1920
	John B. Payne	1920–1921
Secretary of Agriculture	David F. Houston	1913–1920
	Edwin T. Meredith	1920–1921
Secretary of Commerce	William C. Redfield	1913–1919
	Joshua W. Alexander	1919–1921
Secretary of Labor	William B. Wilson	1913–1921

*The Harding Administration (1921–1923)*

Vice President	Calvin Coolidge	1921–1923
Secretary of State	Charles E. Hughes	1921–1923
Secretary of Treasury	Andrew Mellon	1921–1923
Secretary of War	John W. Weeks	1921–1923
Attorney General	Harry M. Daugherty	1921–1923
Postmaster General	Will H. Hays	1921–1922
	Hubert Work	1922–1923
	Harry S. New	1923
Secretary of Navy	Edwin Denby	1921–1923
Secretary of Interior	Albert B. Fall	1921–1923
	Hubert Work	1923
Secretary of Agriculture	Henry C. Wallace	1921–1923
Secretary of Commerce	Herbert C. Hoover	1921–1923
Secretary of Labor	James J. Davis	1921–1923

*The Coolidge Administration (1923–1929)*

Vice President	Charles G. Dawes	1925–1929
Secretary of State	Charles E. Hughes	1923–1925
	Frank B. Kellogg	1925–1929
Secretary of Treasury	Andrew Mellon	1923–1929
Secretary of War	John W. Weeks	1923–1925
	Dwight F. Davis	1925–1929
Attorney General	Henry M. Daugherty	1923–1924
	Harlan F. Stone	1924–1925
	John G. Sargent	1925–1929
Postmaster General	Harry S. New	1923–1929
Secretary of Navy	Edwin Denby	1923–1924
	Curtis D. Wilbur	1924–1929
Secretary of Interior	Hubert Work	1923–1928
	Roy O. West	1928–1929
Secretary of Agriculture	Henry C. Wallace	1923–1924
	Howard M. Gore	1924–1925
	William M. Jardine	1925–1929
Secretary of Commerce	Herbert C. Hoover	1923–1928
	William F. Whiting	1928–1929
Secretary of Labor	James J. Davis	1923–1929

*The Hoover Administration (1929–1933)*

Vice President	Charles Curtis	1929–1933
Secretary of State	Henry L. Stimson	1929–1933
Secretary of Treasury	Andrew Mellon	1929–1932
	Ogden L. Mills	1932–1933
Secretary of War	James W. Good	1929
	Patrick J. Hurley	1929–1933
Attorney General	William D. Mitchell	1929–1933
Postmaster General	Walter F. Brown	1929–1933
Secretary of Navy	Charles F. Adams	1929–1933
Secretary of Interior	Ray L. Wilbur	1929–1933
Secretary of Agriculture	Arthur M. Hyde	1929–1933
Secretary of Commerce	Robert P. Lamont	1929–1932
	Roy D. Chapin	1932–1933
Secretary of Labor	James J. Davis	1929–1930
	William N. Doak	1930–1933



*The Franklin D. Roosevelt Administration (1933–1945)*

Vice President	John Nance Garner	1933–1941
	Henry A. Wallace	1941–1945
	Harry S. Truman	1945
Secretary of State	Cordell Hull	1933–1944
	Edward R. Stettinius, Jr.	1944–1945
Secretary of Treasury	William H. Woodin	1933–1934
	Henry Morgenthau, Jr.	1934–1945
Secretary of War	George H. Dern	1933–1936
	Henry A. Woodring	1936–1940
	Henry L. Stimson	1940–1945
Attorney General	Homer S. Cummings	1933–1939
	Frank Murphy	1939–1940
	Robert H. Jackson	1940–1941
	Francis Biddle	1941–1945
Postmaster General	James A. Farley	1933–1940
	Frank C. Walker	1940–1945
Secretary of Navy	Claude A. Swanson	1933–1940
	Charles Edison	1940
	Frank Knox	1940–1944
	James V. Forrestal	1944–1945
Secretary of Interior	Harold L. Ickes	1933–1945
Secretary of Agriculture	Henry A. Wallace	1933–1940
	Claude R. Wickard	1940–1945
Secretary of Commerce	Daniel C. Roper	1933–1939
	Harry L. Hopkins	1939–1940
	Jesse Jones	1940–1945
	Henry A. Wallace	1945
Secretary of Labor	Frances Perkins	1933–1945

*The Truman Administration (1945–1953)*

Vice President	Alben W. Barkley	1949–1953
Secretary of State	Edward R. Stettinius, Jr.	1945
	James F. Byrnes	1945–1947
	George C. Marshall	1947–1949
	Dean G. Acheson	1949–1953
Secretary of Treasury	Fred M. Vinson	1945–1946
	John W. Snyder	1946–1953
Secretary of War	Robert P. Patterson	1945–1947
	Kenneth C. Royall	1947
Attorney General	Tom C. Clark	1945–1949
	J. Howard McGrath	1949–1952
	James P. McGranery	1952–1953

*The Truman Administration (1945–1953) (cont.)*

Postmaster General	Frank C. Walker	1945
	Robert E. Hannegan	1945–1947
	Jesse M. Donaldson	1947–1953
Secretary of Navy	James V. Forrestal	1945–1947
Secretary of Interior	Harold L. Ickes	1945–1946
	Julius A. Krug	1946–1949
	Oscar L. Chapman	1949–1953
Secretary of Agriculture	Clinton P. Anderson	1945–1948
	Charles F. Brannan	1948–1953
Secretary of Commerce	Henry A. Wallace	1945–1946
	W. Averell Harriman	1946–1948
	Charles W. Sawyer	1948–1953
Secretary of Labor	Lewis B. Schwellenbach	1945–1948
	Maurice J. Tobin	1948–1953
Secretary of Defense	James V. Forrestal	1947–1949
	Louis A. Johnson	1949–1950
	George C. Marshall	1950–1951
	Robert A. Lovett	1951–1953

*The Eisenhower Administration (1953–1961)*

Vice President	Richard M. Nixon	1953–1961
Secretary of State	John Foster Dulles	1953–1959
	Christian A. Herter	1959–1961
Secretary of Treasury	George M. Humphrey	1953–1957
	Robert B. Anderson	1957–1961
Attorney General	Herbert Brownell, Jr.	1953–1958
	William P. Rogers	1958–1961
Postmaster General	Arthur E. Summerfield	1953–1961
Secretary of Interior	Douglas McKay	1953–1956
	Fred A. Seaton	1956–1961
Secretary of Agriculture	Ezra T. Benson	1953–1961
Secretary of Commerce	Sinclair Weeks	1953–1958
	Lewis L. Strauss	1958–1959
	Frederick H. Mueller	1959–1961
Secretary of Labor	Martin P. Durkin	1953
	James P. Mitchell	1953–1961
Secretary of Defense	Charles E. Wilson	1953–1957
	Neil H. McElroy	1957–1959
	Thomas S. Gates, Jr.	1959–1961
Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare	Oveta Culp Hobby	1953–1955
	Marion B. Folsom	1955–1958
	Arthur S. Flemming	1958–1961



*The Kennedy Administration (1961-1963)*

Vice President	Lyndon B. Johnson	1961-1963
Secretary of State	Dean Rusk	1961-1963
Secretary of Treasury	C. Douglas Dillon	1961-1963
Attorney General	Robert F. Kennedy	1961-1963
Postmaster General	J. Edward Day	1961-1963
	John A. Gronouski	1963
Secretary of Interior	Stewart L. Udall	1961-1963
Secretary of Agriculture	Orville L. Freeman	1961-1963
Secretary of Commerce	Luther H. Hodges	1961-1963
Secretary of Labor	Arthur J. Goldberg	1961-1962
	W. Willard Wirtz	1962-1963
Secretary of Defense	Robert S. McNamara	1961-1963
Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare	Abraham A. Ribicoff	1961-1962
	Anthony J. Celebrezze	1962-1963

*The Lyndon Johnson Administration (1963-1969)*

Vice President	Hubert H. Humphrey	1965-1969
Secretary of State	Dean Rusk	1963-1969
Secretary of Treasury	C. Douglas Dillon	1963-1965
	Henry H. Fowler	1965-1969
Attorney General	Robert F. Kennedy	1963-1964
	Nicholas Katzenbach	1965-1966
	Ramsey Clark	1967-1969
Postmaster General	John A. Gronouski	1963-1965
	Lawrence F. O'Brien	1965-1968
	Marvin Watson	1968-1969
Secretary of Interior	Stewart L. Udall	1963-1969
Secretary of Agriculture	Orville L. Freeman	1963-1969
Secretary of Commerce	Luther H. Hodges	1963-1964
	John T. Connor	1964-1967
	Alexander B. Trowbridge	1967-1968
	Cyrus R. Smith	1968-1969
Secretary of Labor	W. Willard Wirtz	1963-1969
Secretary of Defense	Robert F. McNamara	1963-1968
	Clark Clifford	1968-1969
Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare	Anthony J. Celebrezze	1963-1965
	John W. Gardner	1965-1968
	Wilbur J. Cohen	1968-1969
Secretary of Housing and Urban Development	Robert C. Weaver	1966-1969
	Robert C. Wood	1969
Secretary of Transportation	Alan S. Boyd	1967-1969

*The Nixon Administration (1969–1974)*

Vice President	Spiro T. Agnew	1969–1973
	Gerald R. Ford	1973–1974
Secretary of State	William P. Rogers	1969–1973
	Henry A. Kissinger	1973–1974
Secretary of Treasury	David M. Kennedy	1969–1970
	John B. Connally	1971–1972
	George P. Shultz	1972–1974
	William E. Simon	1974
Attorney General	John N. Mitchell	1969–1972
	Richard G. Kleindienst	1972–1973
	Elliot L. Richardson	1973
	William B. Saxbe	1973–1974
Postmaster General	Winton M. Blount	1969–1971
Secretary of Interior	Walter J. Hickel	1969–1970
	Rogers Morton	1971–1974
Secretary of Agriculture	Clifford M. Hardin	1969–1971
	Earl L. Butz	1971–1974
Secretary of Commerce	Maurice H. Stans	1969–1972
	Peter G. Peterson	1972–1973
	Frederick B. Dent	1973–1974
Secretary of Labor	George P. Shultz	1969–1970
	James D. Hodgson	1970–1973
	Peter J. Brennan	1973–1974
Secretary of Defense	Melvin R. Laird	1969–1973
	Elliot L. Richardson	1973
	James R. Schlesinger	1973–1974
Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare	Robert H. Finch	1969–1970
	Elliot L. Richardson	1970–1973
	Caspar W. Weinberger	1973–1974
Secretary of Housing and Urban Development	George Romney	1969–1973
	James T. Lynn	1973–1974
Secretary of Transportation	John A. Volpe	1969–1973
	Claude S. Brinegar	1973–1974

*The Ford Administration (1974–1977)*

Vice President	Nelson A. Rockefeller	1974–1977
Secretary of State	Henry A. Kissinger	1974–1977
Secretary of Treasury	William E. Simon	1974–1977
Attorney General	William Saxbe	1974–1975
	Edward Levi	1975–1977
Secretary of Interior	Rogers Morton	1974–1975
	Stanley K. Hathaway	1975
	Thomas Kleppe	1975–1977



*The Ford Administration (1974–1977) (cont.)*

Secretary of Agriculture	Earl L. Butz	1974–1976
	John A. Knebel	1976–1977
Secretary of Commerce	Frederick B. Dent	1974–1975
	Rogers Morton	1975–1976
	Elliott L. Richardson	1976–1977
Secretary of Labor	Peter J. Brennan	1974–1975
	John T. Dunlop	1975–1976
	W. J. Usery	1976–1977
Secretary of Defense	James R. Schlesinger	1974–1975
	Donald Rumsfeld	1975–1977
Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare	Caspar Weinberger	1974–1975
	Forrest D. Mathews	1975–1977
Secretary of Housing and Urban Development	James T. Lynn	1974–1975
	Carla A. Hills	1975–1977
Secretary of Transportation	Claude Brinegar	1974–1975
	William T. Coleman	1975–1977

*The Carter Administration (1977–1981)*

Vice President	Walter F. Mondale	1977–1981
Secretary of State	Cyrus R. Vance	1977–1980
	Edmund Muskie	1980–1981
Secretary of Treasury	W. Michael Blumenthal	1977–1979
	G. William Miller	1979–1981
Attorney General	Griffin Bell	1977–1979
	Benjamin R. Civiletti	1979–1981
Secretary of Interior	Cecil D. Andrus	1977–1981
Secretary of Agriculture	Robert Bergland	1977–1981
Secretary of Commerce	Juanita M. Kreps	1977–1979
	Philip M. Klutznick	1979–1981
Secretary of Labor	Ray F. Marshall	1977–1981
Secretary of Defense	Harold Brown	1977–1981
Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare	Joseph A. Califano	1977–1979
	Patricia R. Harris	1979
Secretary of Health and Human Services	Patricia R. Harris	1979–1981
Secretary of Education	Shirley M. Hufstедler	1979–1981
Secretary of Housing and Urban Development	Patricia R. Harris	1977–1979
	Moon Landrieu	1979–1981
Secretary of Transportation	Brock Adams	1977–1979
	Neil E. Goldschmidt	1979–1981
Secretary of Energy	James R. Schlesinger	1977–1979
	Charles W. Duncan	1979–1981

*The Reagan Administration (1981–1989)*

Vice President	George Bush	1981–1989
Secretary of State	Alexander M. Haig	1981–1982
	George P. Shultz	1982–1989
Secretary of Treasury	Donald Regan	1981–1985
	James A. Baker III	1985–1988
	Nicholas Brady	1988–1989
Attorney General	William F. Smith	1981–1985
	Edwin A. Meese III	1985–1988
	Richard Thornburgh	1988–1989
Secretary of Interior	James Watt	1981–1983
	William P. Clark, Jr.	1983–1985
	Donald P. Hodel	1985–1989
Secretary of Agriculture	John Block	1981–1986
	Richard E. Lyng	1986–1989
Secretary of Commerce	Malcolm Baldrige	1981–1987
	C. William Verity, Jr.	1987–1989
Secretary of Labor	Raymond Donovan	1981–1985
	William E. Brock	1985–1988
	Ann Dore McLaughlin	1988–1989
Secretary of Defense	Caspar Weinberger	1981–1988
	Frank Carlucci	1988–1989
Secretary of Health and Human Services	Richard Schweiker	1981–1983
	Margaret Heckler	1983–1985
	Otis R. Bowen	1985–1989
Secretary of Education	Terrel H. Bell	1981–1985
	William J. Bennett	1985–1988
	Lauro F. Cavazos	1988–1989
Secretary of Housing and Urban Development	Samuel Pierce	1981–1989
Secretary of Transportation	Drew Lewis	1981–1983
	Elizabeth Dole	1983–1987
	James L. Burnley IV	1987–1989
Secretary of Energy	James Edwards	1981–1982
	Donald P. Hodel	1982–1985
	John S. Herrington	1985–1989

*The Bush Administration (1989–1993)*

Vice President	J. Danforth Quayle III	1989–1993
Secretary of State	James Baker III	1989–1993
Secretary of Treasury	Nicholas Brady	1989–1993
Attorney General	Richard Thornburgh	1989–1991
	William Barr	1991–1993
Secretary of Interior	Manuel Lujan	1989–1993
Secretary of Agriculture	Clayton Yeutter	1989–1991
	Edward Madigan	1991–1993



*The Bush Administration (1989–1993) (cont.)*

Secretary of Commerce	Robert Mosbacher	1989–1992
	Barbara Franklin	1992–1993
Secretary of Labor	Elizabeth Dole	1989–1990
	Lynn Martin	1991–1993
Secretary of Defense	Richard Cheney	1989–1993
Secretary of Health and Human Services	Louis Sullivan	1989–1993
Secretary of Education	Lauro Cavazos	1989–1990
	Lamar Alexander	1990–1993
Secretary of Housing and Urban Development	Jack Kemp	1989–1993
Secretary of Transportation	Samuel Skinner	1989–1991
	Andrew Card	1992–1993
Secretary of Energy	James Watkins	1989–1993
Secretary of Veterans' Affairs	Edward Derwinski	1989–1993

*The Clinton Administration (1993– )*

Vice President	Albert W. Gore, Jr.	1993–
Secretary of State	Warren Christopher	1993–1997
	Madeline Albright	1997–
Secretary of Treasury	Lloyd Bentsen	1993–1994
	Robert Rubin	1995–
Attorney General	Janet Reno	1993–
Secretary of Interior	Bruce Babbitt	1993–
Secretary of Agriculture	Michael Espy	1993–1994
	Dan Glickman	1994–
Secretary of Commerce	Ronald Brown	1993–1996
	Mickey Kantor	1996–1997
	William Daley	1997–
Secretary of Labor	Robert Reich	1993–1997
	Alexis Herman	1997–
Secretary of Defense	Les Aspin	1993–1994
	William Perry	1994–1997
	William Cohen	1997–
Secretary of Health and Human Services	Donna Shalala	1993–
Secretary of Education	Richard Reilly	1993–
Secretary of Housing and Urban Development	Henry Cisneros	1993–1997
	Andrew Cuomo	1997–
Secretary of Transportation	Federico Peña	1993–1997
	Rodney Slater	1997–
Secretary of Energy	Hazel O'Leary	1993–1997
	Federico Peña	1997–1998
	Bill Richardson	1998–
Secretary of Veterans' Affairs	Jesse Brown	1993–1998
	Togo West	1998–

## Supreme Court Justices

<i>Name</i>	<i>Term of Service</i>	<i>Appointed By</i>
JOHN JAY	1789–1795	Washington
James Wilson	1789–1798	Washington
John Rutledge	1790–1791	Washington
William Cushing	1790–1810	Washington
John Blair	1790–1796	Washington
James Iredell	1790–1799	Washington
Thomas Johnson	1792–1793	Washington
William Paterson	1793–1806	Washington
JOHN RUTLEDGE*	1795	Washington
Samuel Chase	1796–1811	Washington
OLIVER ELLSWORTH	1796–1800	Washington
Bushrod Washington	1799–1829	J. Adams
Alfred Moore	1800–1804	J. Adams
JOHN MARSHALL	1801–1835	J. Adams
William Johnson	1804–1834	Jefferson
Brockholst Livingston	1807–1823	Jefferson
Thomas Todd	1807–1826	Jefferson
Gabriel Duvall	1811–1835	Madison
Joseph Story	1812–1845	Madison
Smith Thompson	1823–1843	Monroe
Robert Trimble	1826–1828	J. Q. Adams
John McLean	1830–1861	Jackson
Henry Baldwin	1830–1844	Jackson
James M. Wayne	1835–1867	Jackson
ROGER B. TANEY	1836–1864	Jackson
Philip P. Barbour	1836–1841	Jackson
John Cartron	1837–1865	Van Buren
John McKinley	1838–1852	Van Buren
Peter V. Daniel	1842–1860	Van Buren
Samuel Nelson	1845–1872	Tyler
Levi Woodbury	1845–1851	Polk
Robert C. Grier	1846–1870	Polk
Benjamin R. Curtis	1851–1857	Fillmore
John A. Campbell	1853–1861	Pierce
Nathan Clifford	1858–1881	Buchanan
Noah H. Swayne	1862–1881	Lincoln
Samuel F. Miller	1862–1890	Lincoln
David Davis	1862–1877	Lincoln

*Note:* The names of Chief Justices are printed in capital letters.

\*Although Rutledge acted as Chief Justice, the Senate refused to confirm his appointment.



**Supreme Court Justices** (cont.)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Term of Service</i>	<i>Appointed By</i>
Stephen J. Field	1863–1897	Lincoln
SALMON P. CHASE	1864–1873	Lincoln
William Strong	1870–1880	Grant
Joseph P. Bradley	1870–1892	Grant
Ward Hunt	1873–1882	Grant
MORRISON R. WAITE	1874–1888	Grant
John M. Harlan	1877–1911	Hayes
William B. Woods	1881–1887	Hayes
Stanley Matthews	1881–1889	Garfield
Horace Gray	1882–1902	Arthur
Samuel Blatchford	1882–1893	Arthur
Lucious Q. C. Lamar	1888–1893	Cleveland
MELVILLE W. FULLER	1888–1910	Cleveland
David J. Brewer	1890–1910	B. Harrison
Henry B. Brown	1891–1906	B. Harrison
George Shiras, Jr.	1892–1903	B. Harrison
Howell E. Jackson	1893–1895	B. Harrison
Edward D. White	1894–1910	Cleveland
Rufus W. Peckham	1896–1909	Cleveland
Joseph McKenna	1898–1925	McKinley
Oliver W. Holmes	1902–1932	T. Roosevelt
William R. Day	1903–1922	T. Roosevelt
William H. Moody	1906–1910	T. Roosevelt
Horace H. Lurton	1910–1914	Taft
Charles E. Hughes	1910–1916	Taft
EDWARD D. WHITE	1910–1921	Taft
Willis Van Devanter	1911–1937	Taft
Joseph R. Lamar	1911–1916	Taft
Mahlon Pitney	1912–1922	Taft
James C. McReynolds	1914–1941	Wilson
Louis D. Brandeis	1916–1939	Wilson
John H. Clarke	1916–1922	Wilson
WILLIAM H. TAFT	1921–1930	Harding
George Sutherland	1922–1938	Harding
Pierce Butler	1923–1939	Harding
Edward T. Sanford	1923–1930	Harding
Harlan F. Stone	1925–1941	Coolidge
CHARLES E. HUGHES	1930–1941	Hoover
Owen J. Roberts	1930–1945	Hoover
Benjamin N. Cardozo	1932–1938	Hoover

**Supreme Court Justices** (cont.)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Term of Service</i>	<i>Appointed By</i>
Hugo L. Black	1937–1971	F. Roosevelt
Stanley F. Reed	1938–1957	F. Roosevelt
Felix Frankfurter	1939–1962	F. Roosevelt
William O. Douglas	1939–1975	F. Roosevelt
Frank Murphy	1940–1949	F. Roosevelt
HARLAN F. STONE	1941–1946	F. Roosevelt
James F. Byrnes	1941–1942	F. Roosevelt
Robert H. Jackson	1941–1954	F. Roosevelt
Wiley B. Rutledge	1943–1949	F. Roosevelt
Harold H. Burton	1945–1958	Truman
FREDERICK M. VINSON	1946–1953	Truman
Tom C. Clark	1949–1967	Truman
Sherman Minton	1949–1956	Truman
EARL WARREN	1953–1969	Eisenhower
John Marshall Harlan	1955–1971	Eisenhower
William J. Brennan, Jr.	1956–1990	Eisenhower
Charles E. Whittaker	1957–1962	Eisenhower
Potter Stewart	1958–1981	Eisenhower
Byron R. White	1962–1993	Kennedy
Arthur J. Goldberg	1962–1965	Kennedy
Abe Fortas	1965–1970	L. Johnson
Thurgood Marshall	1967–1991	L. Johnson
WARREN E. BURGER	1969–1986	Nixon
Harry A. Blackmun	1970–1994	Nixon
Lewis F. Powell, Jr.	1971–1987	Nixon
William H. Rehnquist	1971–1986	Nixon
John Paul Stevens	1975–	Ford
Sandra Day O'Connor	1981–	Reagan
WILLIAM H. REHNQUIST	1986–	Reagan
Antonin Scalia	1986–	Reagan
Anthony Kennedy	1988–	Reagan
David Souter	1990–	Bush
Clarence Thomas	1991–	Bush
Ruth Bader Ginsburg	1993–	Clinton
Stephen Breyer	1994–	Clinton



# Additional Bibliography

## Chapter 1

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### Spirituality and World Views

Donald Bahr et al., *The Short, Swift Time of Gods on Earth: The Hohokam Chronicles* (1994); Robert L. Hall, *An Archaeology of the Soul: North American Indian Belief and Ritual* (1997); Åke Hulkrantz, *The Religions of the American Indians* (1979); Lee Irwin, *The Dream Seekers: Native American Visionary Traditions of the Great Plains* (1994); Paul Radin, *The Trickster: A Study in American Indian Mythology* (1972); Elisabeth Tooker, ed., *Native North American Spirituality of the Eastern Woodlands* (1979); Christopher Vecsey, *Imagine Ourselves Richly: Mythic Narratives of North American Indians* (1988); Ray A. Williamson, *Living the Sky: The Cosmos of the American Indian* (1987); Paul Zolbrod, *Diné bahané: The Navajo Creation Story* (1984).

### Demography

Ann F. Ramenofsky, *Vectors of Death: The Archaeology of European Contact* (1987); Russell Thornton, *American Indian Holocaust and Survival: A Population History Since 1492* (1987); John W. Verano and Douglas H. Ubelaker, eds., *Disease and Demography in the Americas* (1992).

## Chapter 2

### Africa and Slavery

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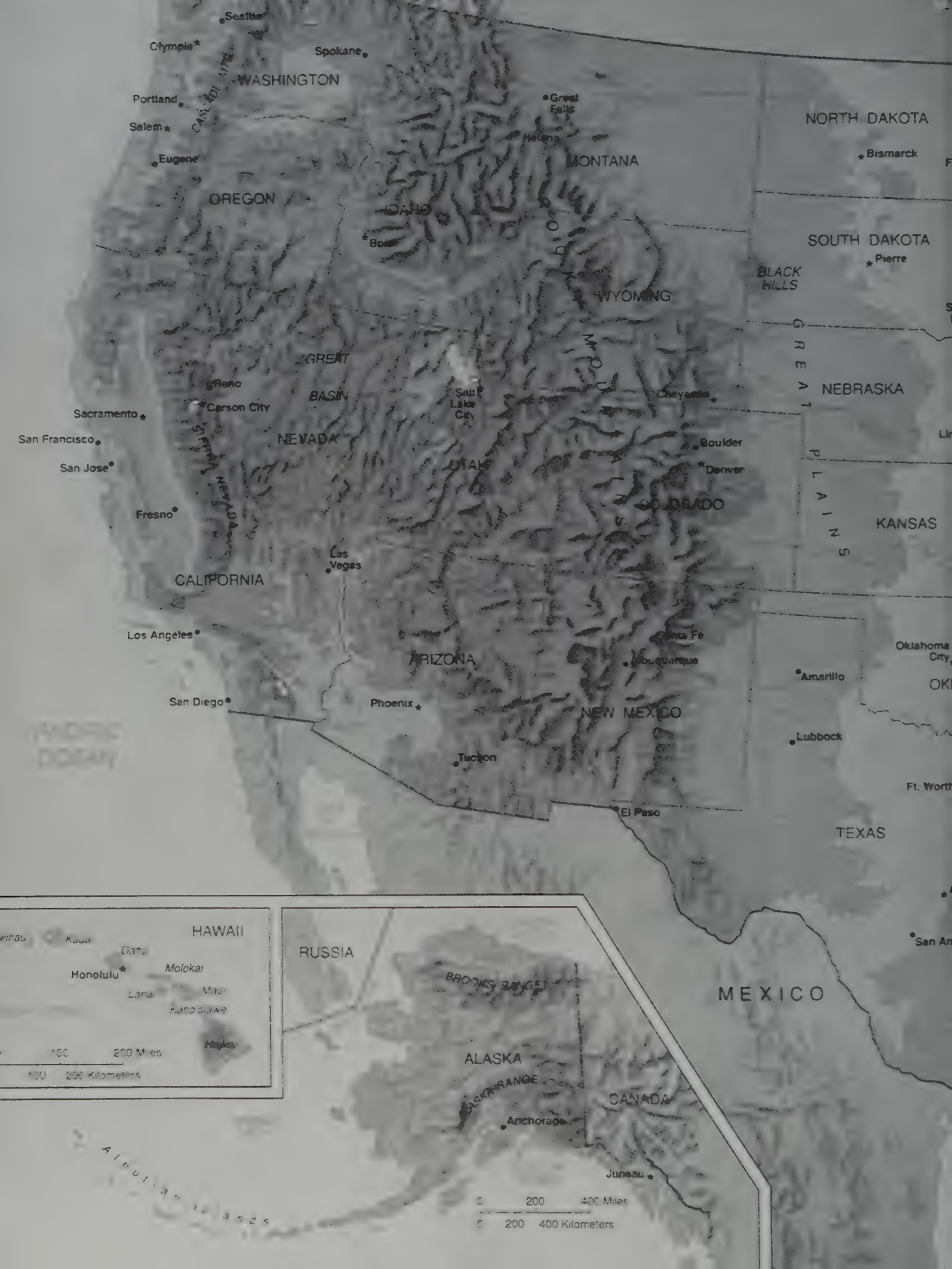


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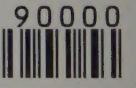




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